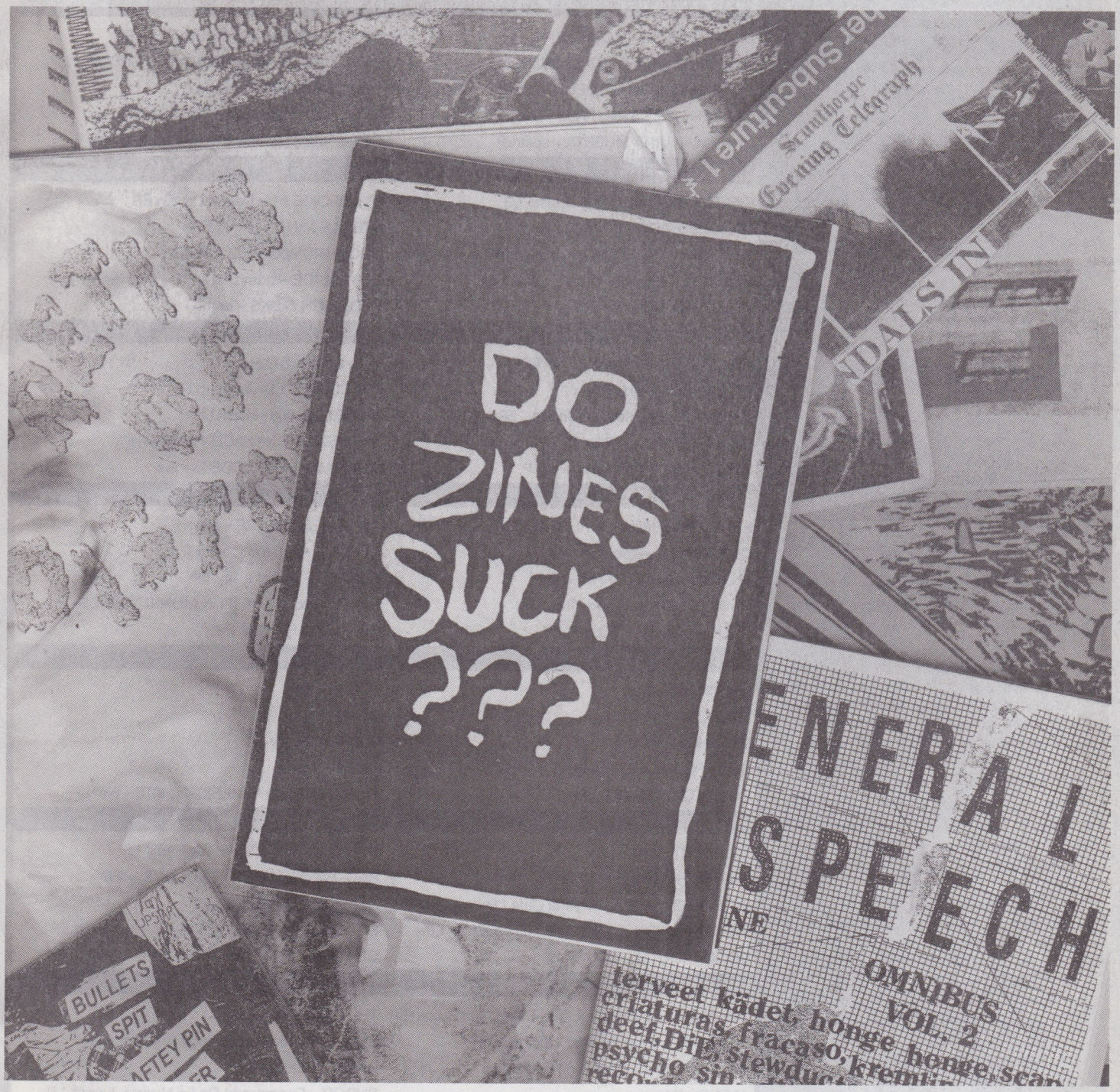
MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

MAY 2016 NO. 396 $4.99 THE ZINES ISSUE



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For what it's worth, here're some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TOP 10

GRACE AMBROSE

- UROCHROMES – T.O.A.P. EP
- WITCHING WAVES – Crystal Cafe LP
- TAIWAN HOUSING PROJECT – Three Song Record EP
- GLITTER – EP / STRUTTER – EP
- DHK / MAQUINA MUERTA – split LP
- RIP – Lekeitio 84 LP / BEDBOYS – EP
- CHROMA – Cuerpos Dóciles LP / SUDOR – LP
- TELEDENTE 666 – Karen LP
- LEMONADE / Q / AMERICAN HATE – live
- CCTV / MYSTIC INANE / BAGHEAD – live

MATT BADENHOP

- KIELTOLAKI – Vapauden Illuusio LP
- NARCOESTADO – Juventud EP
- NEWTOWN NEUROTICS – "Kick Out the Tories" 45
- BEDBOYS – L'Indifferenza Uccide... EP
- STEEL CHAINS – live
- SYNDROME 81 – Desert Urbain EP
- STERILE MIND – Hunted EP
- UROCHROMES – T.O.A.P. EP
- DEATH SIDE – both LPs / RIP – Lekeitio 84 LP
- RADIATION RISKS – demo

WILL BLOMQUIST

- SYNDROME 81 – Desert Urbain EP
- DEATH SIDE – both LPs
- BEDBOYS – L'Indifferenza Uccide... EP
- G-ANX – "Flashbacks" 2xLP
- KIELTOLAKI – Vapauden Illuusio LP
- RIP – Lekeitio 84 LP
- NARCOESTADO – Juventud EP
- TELEDENTE 666 – Karen LP
- SIXBREWBANTHA / ACEPHALIX – live
- MOOR MOTHER GODDESS – live

MITCH CARDWELL

- ESTROGEN HIGHS / FRUSTRATIONS – split LP
- CHROMA – Cuerpos Dóciles LP
- EN KERNAGHAN BAND – LP
- JIMBO EASTER – Terror Trash EP
- UROCHROMES – T.O.A.P. EP
- THE INTELLIGENCE – live
- QUITTER – Altered Flesh EP
- GLITTER – Joy of a Toy EP
- KID CONGO & THE PINK MONKEY BIRDS – LP
- CIRCLEK – First Six EP

ROBERT COLLINS

- LEMONADE – live
- THE BUG – live
- MENTHOL – live
- BODY PRESSURE – live
- DOWNTOWN BOYS – live
- NURSE – live
- CCTV – live
- BAGHEAD – live
- NASTI – live
- THE LIGHT – live / AMERICAN HATE – live

LAYLA GIBBON

- TELEDENTE 666 – LP
- TAIWAN HOUSING PROJECT – EP
- WITCHING WAVES – Crystal Cafe LP
- INSURRECTION – "LTC 203" / CHROMA – LP
- UROCHROMES – T.O.A.P. EP
- DHK / MAQUINA MUERTA – split LP
- RIP – Lekeitio 84 LP / BEDBOYS – EP
- NAMELESS FRAMES – LP
- SUDOR – LP / NARCOESTADO – Juventud EP
- GLITTER – EP / STRUTTER – EP

DAN GOETZ

- TAIWAN HOUSING PROJECT – Three Song Record EP
- BEDBOYS – L'Indifferenza Uccide... EP
- V/A – No Friends Magazine Vol. 2 flexi
- JAENG – live
- GLITTER – Joy of a Toy EP
- THE CAVEMEN – LP
- BLOOD PRESSURE – Need to Control LP
- OAF – Consume EP
- SUDOR – Enamorado De La Muerta Juvenil LP
- GAG – America's Greatest Hits LP

GREG HARVESTER

- NARCOESTADO – Juventud EP
- STERILE MIND – Hunted EP
- UROCHROMES – T.O.A.P. EP
- TAIWAN HOUSING PROJECT – Three Song Record EP
- MIND SPIDERS – Prosthesis LP
- CHROMA – Cuerpos Dóciles LP
- DHK / MAQUINA MUERTA – split LP
- KOMMIE KILPATRICK – Let's Get Small EP
- BASEMENT BENDERS / THE BANANAS – live
- THE BODY / FRED & TOODY – live

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

KENNY KAOS

- V/A – Dumptruck Records Volume 1 LP
- STUDY HALL – Jackleen EP
- RADIO HEARTS – Tell You EP
- AEROSOL BURNS – "Afraid of the Phone" 45
- DEVIOUS ONES – "I'm Allergic To You" 45
- WITCHING WAVES – Crystal Cafe LP
- NEWTOWN NEUROTICS – "Kick Out the Tories" 45
- RADIO HEARTS – Lot To Learn EP
- UROCHROMES – T.O.A.P. EP
- EUREKA CALIFORNIA – LP / MADCAPS – LP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- NARCOESTADO – Juventud EP
- TELEDENTE 666 – Karen LP
- BUMMERS EVE – LP
- NAMELESS FRAMES – LP
- EN KERNAGHAN BAND – LP
- ILLS – Fuck This Planet 10"
- KID CONGO & THE PINK MONKEY BIRDS – LP
- THE CAVEMEN – LP / UROCHROMES – T.O.A.P. EP
- CIRCLEK – First Six EP
- JOHNNY MOPED – It's A Real Cool Baby CD

RAY LUJAN

- NEWTOWN NEUROTICS – "Kick Out the Tories" 45
- CAVES – Leaving 12"
- DELETIONS – Hungers LP
- EUREKA CALIFORNIA – Versus LP
- FACE TO FACE – Protection LP
- GET BENT – LP / GIANT PEACH – LP
- JOHNNY MOPED – It's A Real Cool Baby CD
- MAX LEVINE ENSEMBLE – Backlash, Baby LP
- MIND SPIDERS – Prosthesis LP
- RADIO HEARTS – Lot To Learn EP

ROTTEN RON READY

- DHK / MAQUINA MUERTA – split LP
- THE CAVEMEN – LP
- GAG – America's Greatest Hits LP
- CHROMA – Cuerpos Dóciles LP
- ISOTOPE – "Midnight Soldier/Final Wind of Mercy"
- LAURICE – G.A.Y.D.A.R. LP
- CRETINS – Meat EP
- GLITTER – Joy of a Toy EP
- FRENZY – Disconnected EP
- VIOLENCE – live

FRED SCHRUNK

Cleaning the Thrillhouse bathroom...

LENA TAHMASSIAN

- SUDOR – Enamorado De La Muerta Juvenil LP
- CHROMA – Cuerpos Dóciles LP
- WITCHING WAVES – Crystal Cafe LP
- RIP – Lekeitio 84 LP
- SYNDROME 81 – Desert Urbain EP
- EN KERNAGHAN BAND – LP
- NARCOESTADO – Juventud EP
- FRENZY – Disconnected EP
- MIND SPIDERS – Prosthesis LP
- STEEL CHAINS – live

ELI WALD

- EVERYTHING IS NOT OK VOL 2 – live
- FRED AND TOODY – live
- DHK / MAQUINA MUERTA – split LP
- GAG – LP / GAUCHO – EP
- OAF – Consume EP / FRENZY – Disconnected EP
- TELEDENTE 666 – LP / UROCHROMES – EP
- SUDOR – Enamorado De La Muerta Juvenil LP
- STRUTTER – Will to Learn EP
- CHROMA – Cuerpos Dóciles LP
- GLITTER – Joy of a Toy EP

BRENDAN WELLS

- GLITTER – Joy of a Toy EP
- STRUTTER – Will to Learn EP
- OUTTA GAS – Terrified EP
- UROCHROMES – T.O.A.P. EP
- WARM BODIES / DUMSPELL / 86 GEMINI – live
- CHERRY DEATH / BIB / PHANTOM HEAD – live
- TAIWAN HOUSING PROJECT – Three Song Record EP
- CIRCLEK – First Six EP
- KOMMIE KILPATRICK – Let's Get Small EP
- ENJOY CLEVELAND – DVD

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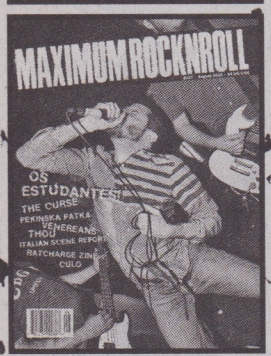
BACK ISSUES / SUBSCRIPTIONS / RENEWALS

LIKE WHAT YOU'RE READING IN *MRR* #396? RECOMMENDED READING FROM THE MRRchive:

MRR #244/Sept '03

This one has an interview with **TRUST fanzine**, a staple of DIY punk out of Germany since 1986. Also: None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines.



MRR #327/Aug '10

More music zine brilliance in this issue's interview with **RATCHARGE** out of France. Plus: Brazilian rippers OS ESTUDANTES, early punk pioneers THE CURSE, Conta of PEKINSKA PATKA on Yugoslavian punk and new wave, Spain's VENEREANS, New Oreleans' THOU, CULO, Italy scene reprt. Cover photo by Mateus Mondini.

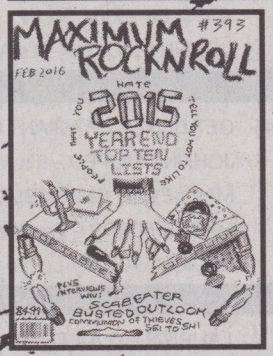
MRR #363/Aug '13

FFO Classic Finnish zines: an interview with **TOINEN VAIHTOEHTO**. As well as: SUDOR, TERVEET KÄDET, Barcelona's LAS OTRAS, Japan's BLACK AND WHITE, STILLSUIT, Baitline!!! zine, L.A. punk veteran Taquila Mockingbird, John Holmstron on the late Arturo Vega, RUINED FAMILIES, R.O.T.T.E.R.89, San Jose, CA's NO MISTAKE, SIREN SONGS, Yorba Linda, CA scene report, and photo spreads from Steven Rudd at Chaos in Tejas and Ian from ABSURDO on their US tour.

RECENT BACK ISSUES: MRR's Latest and Greatest

MRR #392/Jan '16

BLANK SPELL from Philadelphia, Oakland's ANDY HUMAN, G.L.O.S.S. tour diary, East Anglian hardcore from VOLUNTEERS, S.H.I.B.G.B.'s retrospective, Detroit's Salinas Records, Beirut's TEX FOX, one-man band from New Orleans ROOM 101, photo spreads from Static Shock Weekend and Austin's Collective Delusion/Mass Hysteria exhibition, Still Not Quiet on the Western Front fest announcement.



MRR #393/Feb '16

2015 Year-End Top Tens, the Bay Area's BUSTED OUTLOOK, SCAB EATER from Australia, NYC/Japan's SEI TO SHI, COMMUNION OF THIEVES from El Paso, and a Cacophonie Nights photo spread.

MRR #394/Mar '16

SCUMRAID from Korea; San Francisco's COLD BEAT; Glaswegian hardcore from CLOCKED OUT; the LANDLORDS from Charlottesville, VA; Minneapolis's CONSTANT INSULT; Helsinki's DARFÜR; UTAH JAZZ from Buffalo; UAE scene report; This Is Austin, Not That Great photo spread; Ralph Rivera's first column, Brendan Wells's first issue as coordinator

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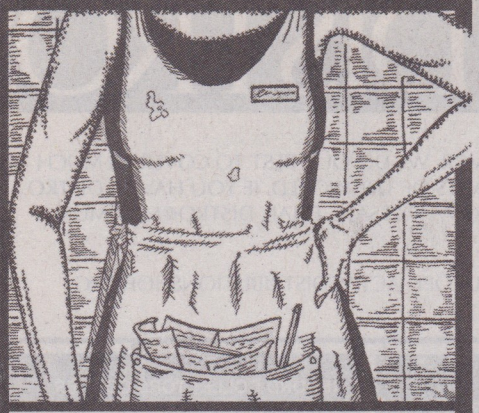

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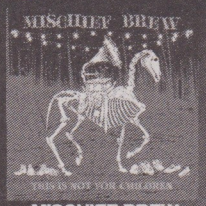

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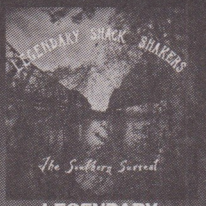

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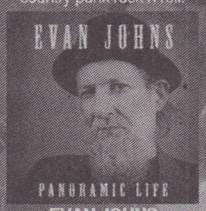

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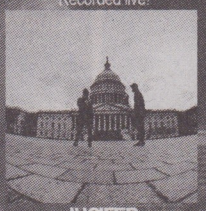

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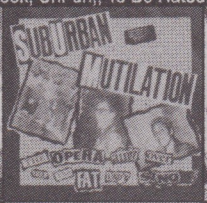

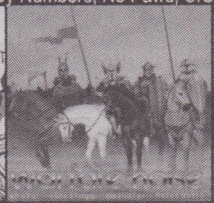

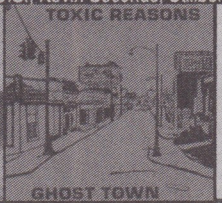

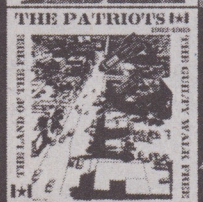

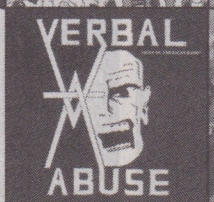

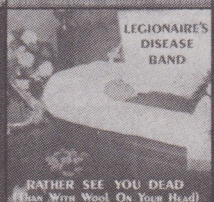

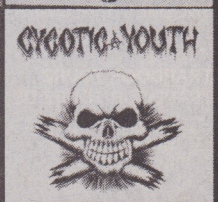

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LETTERS

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Hello,

My band is currently trying to book a cassette release. My first release ever, how exciting!

This is may sound very odd, but when my band started out someone at Thrillhouse Records recommended that I email this address to get advice for booking a show. Although I have no problem with putting the time in to fully flesh my first event, I have run into a horrible, terrible obstacle...

I can't find any bands. I am a nineteen-year-old South San Francisco kid with few friends and the main issue I have with getting a full bill is that a lot of punk bands like to do this thing where they stay as obscure as possible so when I stalk a platform like bandcamp, the Oakland / SF / Santa Cruz / San Jose punk catalog of bands is bone dry while something else like fucking indie pop or bedroom pop is *maxed the heck out*.

What I am asking is not for you to book the show for me—you guys have better things to do—but to send me some links to other no name bands who could use a helping hand. I play music that no one gives a shit about and trying to get shows is a pain, so it would be cool if I could help out other people that are in a similar situation.

Bonus points if you can send us some Bay bands with other people of color. (We are a Filipino frontman, a Black Jewish drummer, and a Peruvian bassist!)

Your zine is the shit!

—Francis

We wrote to Francis with some ideas about bands he could play with in the Bay but if anyone reading this want to get in touch with him, drop us a line. We'll connect you!

If you're a young person reading this and feel similarly to Francis, get in touch. We want to feature more young punks in the zine! If you play in a band or work on DIY projects with other teenage punks, interview each other and send the results to us! Mail us your CD-Rs, tapes, and records! We'll play 'em on the radio and review them here.

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We want to know what you're doing. Yes, you, what are YOU doing? Do you feel like *Maximum Rocknroll* doesn't represent you because we've never interviewed your band or your friends about their zines? *You can change that!* Lose all preconceived assumptions about the magazine you are holding. You have something to say, even if you don't live in San Francisco like we do. This isn't some kind of exclusive cool guy club that you need to be invited to, but you DO need to interview your friend's band and write a scene report on your town and send it to us if you want to see it in this magazine. Send us your records, your tapes, your zines: everything.

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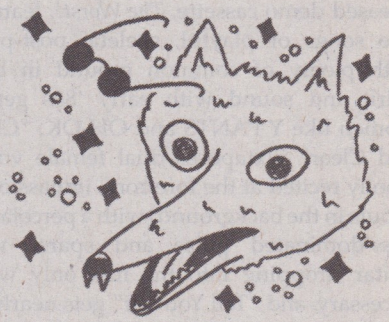

We got a message from another teenager, asking the age-old questions this magazine has been trying to answer for almost four decades.

My name is Trevor. I'm a senior in high school and I was wondering if you could help me out by answering the questions below. We have to do this thing in order to graduate called a Senior Expo where you create a thesis and thenn you have to prove it over a fifteen to twenty minute presentation. Part of that is having a primary source and I was hoping one of your writers could be that primary source.

My thesis is "Punk is a culture not only a musical genre." These are the questions they would have to answer for me:

- How would you define "punk"?
- Do you think there's more to punk than just the sound?
- Are all bands who play punk, the music, a punk band in the ideological sense as well?
- What do you think the most important key value of punk is?

Thank you for your help.

Trevor

Do you have thoughts? Send your responses to us so we can help Trevor graduate and escape the clutches of high school!

COLUMNS

First up this month, I'm really applying myself to this "futures and pasts" concept with two like-minded Vancouver post-punk bands operating 35 years apart—everything is always cyclical. TOUGH CUSTOMER started up late last year and their just-released demo cassette, *The Worst!*, features five songs of playful, skeletal post-punk with plenty of common ground in both spirit and sound with early '80s genius women like Y PANTS and OH-OK. "Clean and Clear" juxtaposes dual female vocals (coolly recited at the forefront, impassioned shouts in the background) with a percolating bass-dominated pulse and sparse wiry guitar dropping into the mix only when necessary, and "Tell You Off" gets nearly an entire song out of little more than a choppy disco-not-disco drumbeat and a sing-song hopscotch chant of "*I'll tell you off, tell you off, tell you off!*" resulting in some major 99 Records/NYC Downtown '81 vibes. If these songs were paintings, they'd be in the Russian Supremacist school—bold intersecting lines and sharp-edged geometric shapes surrounded by ample negative space, all in a stark color palette of red, black, and white. I'm already in love with this band. (self-released, actualtoughcustomer.bandcamp.com)

The North American West Coast was a total breeding ground in the late '70s and early '80s for self-taught freaks and oddballs who brought the provocative and conceptualist bent of their art school backgrounds to the production of deliriously DIY post-punk rackets, from PINK SECTION in San Francisco to SUBURBAN LAWNS in Southern California to the BEAKERS in Seattle. While I'm not sure whether or not they ever actually passed through art school, up in British Columbia, co-ed post-punk quartet TIN TWIST were staging similarly off-kilter musical happenings that were eventually documented on their sole recording, a three-song 7" put out on the Mo Da Mu label (collectively-run by a group of Vancouver musicians, artists, and sound technicians) in 1981. A-Side "Sometimes It's Funny" could almost pass for PYLON transported across international boundaries with its hypnotic, economical guitar, wild-eyed female vocals, and locked-in bass/drums thump, while on the flip, "Stupid Cars" and "Sitting Here, Waiting Here" both adhere to the same unhinged structure of agitated danceability, low-budget space age keyboard stabs, and joint boy/girl vocals (from guitarist Alvin Collis and keyboard player Judy Kemen) hollered back and forth at each other that made the aforementioned Californians so endearing. Track down a copy, jam it back-to-back with the TOUGH CUSTOMER demo, thank me later.

Adelaide's NEIGHBOURHOOD THREAT released a cassette of their debut recordings in mid-2015, and I've actually seen little to no mention of it nearly a year later, which might simply be a consequence of the staggering amount of really great music coming from Down Under these days also competing for the geographical attention of adherents to the worldwide DIY underground. There's a slightly sinister post-punk edge to NEIGHBOURHOOD THREAT's ragged pop sensibilities that recalls some of Australia's finest—the GO-BETWEENS in their formative years, certainly, but also the less-heralded MOODISTS and TRIFFIDS, particularly on the soft-focus slow unraveling of the tape's opener, "Clinical Precision." They're equally capable of knocking out a jangly two-minute lo-fi garage-pop nugget in the DICK DIVER / WOOLLEN KITS vein (see "Trivial Pursuit"), but "No Man's Land" shows the smudged fingerprints of some influences from the other side of the Pacific, including the same sorts of squalling guitar feedback and drugged-out VELVET UNDERGROUND-indebted noisy drone that made the DREAM SYNDICATE's *The Days of Wine and Roses* LP that band's high water mark. Another one of those tapes that would have dominated my best of 2015 list if I hadn't been so slow on the uptake. (Cheap and Nasty, cheapnasty.bandcamp.com)

The hiccupping vocals and cut-up, asymmetrical rhythms all over FOSTER BODY's new LP, *Moving Display*, are seemingly descended directly from the minimalist post-punk stutter of late '70s/early '80s NYC weirdos COME ON, who formed a missing stylistic link between early TALKING HEADS and the *No New York* compilation. Frontperson Robin Banks' dramatic delivery perfectly suits the band's nervous, tightly-wound energy, switching from a desperate yell on the disorienting stop-start rush of "See-See" to a clipped, urgent speak-sing on the jerking and DEVO-esque "Conversation No. 1" to a warbling trill on "Drawer" over a frenetic neo-JAMES CHANCE AND THE CONTORTIONS No Wave clang. Bassist Dyana Durfee takes over the microphone on the killer "Listen" and coldly sneers "*there are no questions / and you still make answers*" over a build-up of atonal guitar scrape and a repetitive rubber band bassline, culminating in her shrieked declaration of "*let me teach you / you're my responsibility.*" You know that classic BUSH TETRAS song "Too Many Creeps"? If there's a post-punk pantheon of jagged, deeply acidic "fuck you" anthems directed at all of the mansplainers and privilege-denying male assholes out there, this one belongs right there with it. (Diabolical Records, fosterbody.bandcamp.com)

From the deep archives of neglected vintage femme-punk: New York City's DIZZY AND THE ROMILARS were led by guitarist Ramona Jan, who had been a founding member of the COMATEENS before bailing on them at the end of the '70s. The ROMILARS' 1980 debut two-song single is marked by Ramona's giddy vocals that are, in a lot of ways, a nod to the bad girl attitude of power pop heroines like Holly Vincent and Nikki Corvette of the similarly-named HOLLY AND THE ITALIANS and NIKKI AND THE CORVETTES, spiked with the retro-futurist New Wave kitsch aesthetic of the Kate and Cindy-led side of the B-52S. Bassist Angelo Zarrelli contributes some boyish "*ohhh whoa ohhh*" bubblegum backing

vocals to both side of the 7", with the sugary sweet harmonies and bubbly synth on A-Side "Elizabeth's Lover" updating the '60s girl group sound for the early '80s post-BLONDIE New Wave scene, and the super-catchy B-Side "Star Time" not sounding too far off from what the WAITRESSES were up to around the same time over in Ohio (and whose guitarist Chris Butler wound up producing the next and final DIZZY AND THE ROMILARS record, 1982's *Daily Dose* EP). Recommended for anyone wrestling over punk guilt as a result of their enjoyment of the more sweet tooth-triggering big names of 1980s power-pop and New Wave.

Send me letters and music! Let's talk!
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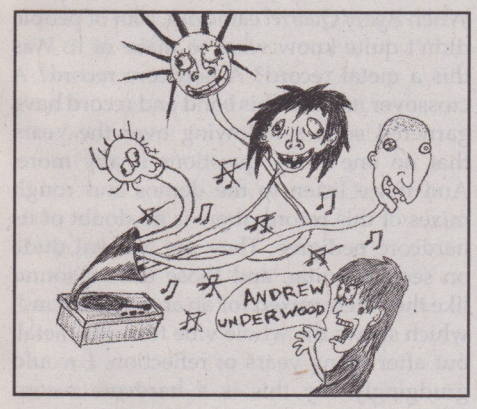


Fuck, at this point it would only be fair for Nori to send me a check every month, since this column has basically become the Pogo 77 Records / TOM & BOOTS BOYS report. This month, TOM & BOOT BOYS' split with MUTANT ITCH (which was supposed to be out for last summer's All Punks Go For It Fest, but what are you gonna do?) has hit the streets. The record looks great, with enough similarities between the cover art (by Nori) and interior art (by Garpaul of MENTAL ITCH) to give the record a unified feel while highlighting both bands' aesthetic. Neither of the TOM & BOOT BOYS songs on this record achieve the depths (heights?) of catchy stupidity that they captured on the *Old Punks* comp, but they're both solid cuts, "You Never Give Up For Your Life" being the catchier tune and "1. 2. Song" being the more stupid of the two. MUTANT ITCH continue to refine their sound, joining the relentless fuzz and drive of crasher crust to the full, round bass lines and "Arrrgh" vocal style of noise punk. Drummer Mitchell deserves particular praise for his ability to blend 1-2 pogo beats and galloping crust beats into a very fluid and aggressive style. The raw recording does the band a favor as well—it's fuzzy without ever being muddy or causing any particular instrument to be overpowered. With Northern California mostly caught up in a post-punk/shoegaze/weirdo art phase at the moment, I hope that MUTANT ITCH will be making frequent trips up to the Bay Area, and I expect that I'll be headed down to Fresno sooner rather than later to scratch my hardcore itch as well. NB: my copy had the labels on the wrong sides of the record. Not that any of my brilliant readers would mistake MUTANT ITCH for TOM & BOOT BOYS or vice-versa, but it's always good to help clarify issues when possible. (Pogo 77 / Dark Raids)

To be brutally honest, I wasn't all that impressed with LASTSENTENCE's material on their recent split with VOCO PROTESTA. The songs were longer than the first EP/demo material, but the band wasn't using that extra time to do anything very interesting. Fortunately, while the new EP (*Absurd Days*) also features longer songs, these cuts are brimming with catchy riffs and interesting melodies and breaks. The tagline is still "Raw noise mangel-attack," and to a certain extent that's accurate, but there's a lot more going on here than C-beats and speed for speed's sake. Hell, if every song they write from now on is as good as the ASTA KASK-tinged (but still crusty) "Again," I'll actually petition them to play slower from now on! (Guerrilla Records)

I don't think I've ever reviewed half an EP before, and lo: I'm about to do that exact thing twice in one column! First, here's to the SKITSÖFRENIA side of their split with DISPOSE. Of course supporting Malay punk is a pretty worthwhile thing to do on its own, but the three tracks they contribute to the record (recorded in 2010, and just now seeing the light of day for whatever reason) are a really killer blend of early Swedish D-beat and Japanese HC-style guitar shredding, with remarkably authentic-sounding Swedish-language vocals. They've definitely studied all the little tricks (a quick dose of melody here, a crucial tempo change there, limited but memorable lyrics) that made bands like DISARM, early ANTI-CIMEX, and BOMBANFALL great, and then they drop in these crazy Randy Uchida-wanna-be solos that shouldn't fit but somehow make perfect sense in context. The DISPOSE side is eminently skip-able, but I heartily recommend picking this up for a reasonable price to check out SKITSÖFRENIA (and if anybody's holding a copy of their CD-R, I'm definitely in the market for one!). (K.Tuotanto/Rawmantic Disasters)

Half split the second? The ABORTICIDIO side of the split with ISOLATION AS A CULT. ABORTICIDIO have, um...interesting taste in partners when it comes to labels and split-mates. To be perfectly honest, the ISOLATION AS A CULT side is quite solid if you're into noisecore (of the two-second song variety, that is), but with Giulio the Bastard, and all his weird kinda fascist/nationalist baggage on board, I figure most bands would keep their distance. Of course, ABORTICIDIO have made a point of using the most gross sexually explicit art they can come up with on every release to date, so I suppose associating themselves with controversy isn't something they worry about overmuch. At any rate, and as usual, their material on this record is fucking fantastic. One track of driving noisy hardcore ("Cancion Del Futuro") that sounds like they beat up NERVESKADE and stole their best song. And then, and then..."Ya Mejor Que Nos Lleve La Policia," a repetitive, damaged punk track that sounds like listening to the classic Dangerhouse singles while dying of a heroin overdose. Melodic, muddy, confusing, and wonderful. There are keyboards! Don't even hold out for a good price, just buy this fucking EP so you can hear the ABORTICIDIO tracks. (F.O.A.D. Records)

Check it out: SAD BOYS demo one-sided 12" on Discos Enfermos with an etched B-side. You should get it. You should get it even if you already have the demo tape because it sounds great, etching is cool, and you need to be reminded just how great and bleak and awful SAD BOYS were. Look, I listen to a lot of fucking punk, all the goddamn time, and take it from me when I say that there are very few punk bands capable of producing lyrics as dark as "Hate Sex," "Frolic!," "Eat Shit," "Sad and Drunk," or "Sad Boys," much less producing those lyrics and joining them to cheery major-key '90s bondage pants punk to such devastating effect. As always, your mileage may vary, but I think you're really not getting it unless you sit down and really listen to this band, as dumb as that might sound. At any rate, if you're into SAD BOYS (or even if you're just BOYS-curious) you should pick up this reissue, even if I am annoyed that they airbrushed out the SAD BOY's usually ubiquitous dong on the cover. (Discos Enfermos)

Finally, I've got two new demo CDR-s this month that are as different as two releases can be while still theoretically representing the same genre. Japan's SLUDGE, best known for their *Conduct* LP on Crust War, have just dropped *Demo 02*, and holy shit it's fantastic. I liked the LP quite a bit, but this stuff is quite a bit better written and executed. The earlier stuff was a bit too heavily weighted to the metal side of metallic hardcore equation, and that balance

is righted here, keeping the flashy solos while toning down the technical riffing (for the most part anyway—some of the riffs in "Binding Firmly" wouldn't be out of place on an AT THE GATES record). An excellent recording helps to elevate the material as well. This could easily have been pressed as a vinyl EP, but much respect to the band for demoing this new material first, though I won't be surprised if some or all of these songs end up on their next "proper" release. (self-released, info@punkbeat.net)

On the other hand, the AFTER demo sounds like it was recorded during a car crash, joining elements of the most extremely chaotic crust (think DECONSTRUCTION) to a spine of tough Japanese hardcore à la SLANG. Instruments and vocals fade in and out of the ultra-primitive recording, and the whole thing has an off-kilter, almost menacing vibe which is only enhanced by the lack of information included with the release. Just a couple of band member photos that look like mugshots, song titles, and a phone number for contact (that's old-school as fuck!). Three songs that will leave you sweating wondering what the fuck is going on, capped off with an absolutely vicious mosh riff. Keep an eye out for this—it feels dangerous in a way that very little punk feels dangerous these days.

Time to revisit the 2015 Year End Top Tens. Several records did not reach us here in the provincial upper Midwest in time to make my 2015 list that will get disqualified from 2016 list, notably the new KIELTOLAKI LP, CØNDITIØN LP, and STRESS SS EP. As in many past years, I carefully read through other people's Top Tens and checked out a lot of bands to see what I might be missing. And as in years past, my initial thought that I was missing out on a lot of great bands was tempered by the fact that I just wasn't that into most of the bands everyone else seems to like. Not that it's good or bad. I just sometimes grapple with the fear that I am old and out of touch and missing out on something really great, but it always turns out that if it's something I would really like, I manage to find out about it. Again, I let out a sigh of relief. It's almost refreshing to have musical tastes that are somewhat out of vogue as I don't have to hustle so hard to keep up.

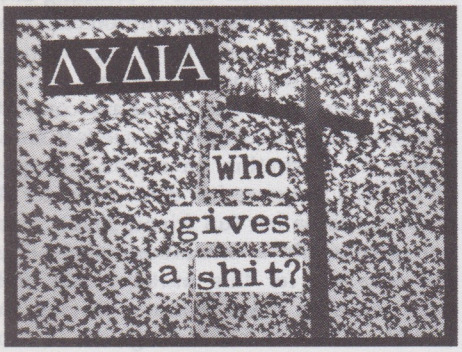
Next, let's talk about the demise of the 7". This really puzzles me. As someone who distributes records and sells them online, I've noticed a precipitous decline in interest in 7"s. Here's the brutal truth: most of the best hardcore/punk records are 7"s, and usually a band's first 7" at that. A lot of bands struggle to write an LP worth of good material, so most bands wind up with one or two killer 7"s followed up by several lackluster to middling LPs. Despite this, no one is interested in buying 7"s any more, especially not by new bands. I recently had to cut the price on most of the 7" releases from the past five years or so in my webstore down to one or two dollars just to try to clear some space as many hadn't sold a copy in a year or more. At the shop here, 7" sales are way down as well. I know a lot of distros are now hesitant to pick up a 7" by all but the most hyped-up bands. Rather a sad state of affairs if you ask me. I'm sure pricing has something to do with it—in the past few years some egregious price gouging has pushed most 7"s up to the price of an LP during the DIY years. But for other factors? It's hard to guess what is driving it. People seem focused on LPs despite the eye watering prices being charged for them, especially relative to '90s–'00s prices or 7" prices. It could be generational. As a member of a now fading generation of punks, I have always been focused on 7"s. Indeed, when I started my label, it was originally intended to be 7"s only. I remember frequently only bringing 7" boxes of records to sell at gigs because the LPs weren't worth the trouble. I don't think anyone would do that now. Times and tastes change, but it doesn't change the truth about crucial 7"s: bands will keep making them because they are concise and pure.

Another thing I've noticed, which is actually kind of refreshing, is that since it is now so hard to get vinyl pressed, tons of bands and labels are doing cassettes again. I fully back this trend, and if a cassette is really great, it will come out on vinyl in the future for certain. But why wait six months to get vinyl pressed if you can do a cassette today?

The past few months I've been talking about crossover, and this month I'll write about a few of the New York bands that strongly influenced the scene. We discussed AGNOSTIC FRONT's experimentation with metal a few months ago, but for me it was LEEWAY who did the best job of mixing metal with hardcore *if* you don't count the CRO-MAGS (more on that below). LEEWAY was one of the first bands I saw in the '80s who were mixing metal into their NY hardcore sound. I saw them play at the Loft in Baltimore and bought their most crucial *Enforcer* demo. This demo captures the band making the jump from NY hardcore into metal/crossover territory. Some of the songs appear on the band's outstanding debut LP *,Born to Expire*, which didn't come out until 1988. In the interregnum, the songs got a lot more metal and crunchy and produced, but the hardcore spirit was still there. The intro bust on this LP is some outstanding knuckle-dragging neanderthal mossshhh. I've always loved the energy and power in this LP. It falls right in between the energy and optimism of the up and coming Youth Crew bands and the tough street attitude of the older NYHC scene. LEEWAY's second LP, *Desperate Measures*, showed the band maturing. Usually when a hardcore band matures, it's not good. And for LEEWAY, sad to say, they fit the pattern. The songs are OK, but there is too much production, too much musicianship, and the whole deal seems produced and professional, lacking the energy and anger of a hardcore record.

What can we say about the CRO-MAGS? When *Age of Quarrel* came out, a lot of people didn't quite know what to make of it. Was this a metal record? A hardcore record? A crossover record? This band and record have garnered such a following over the years that no one really questions it any more. And if we listen to the demos and rough mixes of this record, there is no doubt of its hardcore pedigree. They got a metal dude on second guitar, and those drums sound like they were mixed for an arena rock band, which skews the whole vibe towards metal, but after many years of reflection, I would grudgingly say this is a hardcore record and not really a crossover or metal record, although it does have some influences from those scenes. When this record first came out, the band was heavily associated with the most violent and extreme wing of the skinhead movement. Knowing what I know now, I don't think it was their intent to convey any kind of extreme political views, and I think John Joseph wrote some good lyrics and had a lot to say on the subject of vegetarianism (he still does!). But in the mid '80s, we didn't have the access to information we have now, so a lot of rumor and hearsay swirled around bands associated with the skinhead scene, not the least of which was spread by those bands' typically confused followers. Regardless, when I first heard *Age of Quarrel*, I was impressed with the power and audacity of it, even if it had kind of an overproduced sound. I bought a copy, but kept it over at my girlfriend's house because I was afraid of what people might say if they saw such a controversial skinhead band's record on my turntable. A few months later, the band seemed to take off, and it was no longer scandalous to be a fan, and I brought the record home. It's funny to think about now as it seems like just another record, but

people took music, lyrics, and politics pretty seriously back then.



Slowing down but never stopping

Damn, London is wicked! I'm back for a couple weeks, and I've not spent one whole day at home! I've been to punk shows and noise shows, got drunk on champagne beer, high in cemeteries and marshes, had divine food from around the world, bought a bunch of records, spent time with family, and was generally a bad influence on friends, convincing them to skip their responsibilities and instead get day drunk with me on French Kisses. Also, I went to DIY Space for London finally!

I was so psyched to be there I actually had crazy butterflies in my stomach for the first half of the evening. ALTER and Static Shock were putting on a mini fest with a bunch of sick hardcore bands and electronic projects, with highlights from NO FORM, the LOWEST FORM, and of course headliners DAMIEN DUBROVNIK. I reunited with the Spanish contingent; met the Greek punk goddess after my own heart, Alexandra from EFIALTIS (interview coming soon!); bulls-eyed a bunch of darts tipsy on fruity ciders; and hung out with the NO FORM boys—ugh, sweetest bunch! They played an impressive live performance that I found superior to the record, which is still pretty darn great and kinda Dadaist in a way that's uncomfortable and tantalizing at the same time—def one of the most exciting new bands outta the UK right now!

The LOWEST FORM (interview in the works!), whom I saw again a week later, were both times tight and on point. The new songs aren't banging, they're mental! A tad more mid-tempo than some of their first hella catchy but hella mean riffs, with simple yet smart drum arrangements that highlight the rest of the frenzied action, and of course #chrisbresswickedreggae on vocals and in the pit! The crowd went wild, knocking over the front monitors, moshing, pogoing, head-banging, stage diving—it was great! Who needs drugs when you've got hardcore? PERSPEX FLESH were also hot and raging ("That band that wants to be American but is, you know, English?") while DAMIEN DUBROVNIK were simply stunning. Loke and Christian, who run Posh Isolation Records in Denmark, delivered a set that was hella stirring, and not necessarily in a comfortable kind of way. While their tone and dynamic is often harsh and prickly, their sounds and textures are often soothing and subtle—it's a magnificent combo. I was standing right in front of a massive tower of speakers, so every time a beat came down I would feel a little gust of cold air coming from the subwoofer. The eerie keys and growling vocals punctured the high-pitched frequencies that cut through the room like earthquake cracks from floor to ceiling. The walls of sound made the real walls shudder, the reverberations of crashing metal panes permeating my whole existence, my eyes firmly shut throughout the whole set. The two tall men in white shirts felt more like mediators than performers. Like modern day Teslas, they were harnessing a force that was as electric as it was electrifying. This was more than just noises coming from speakers, it was a deluge of sound waves, and I was soaking it up. More unapologetic, uncomfortable, uncompromising music, please!

I also got to meet with both Robert Refuse *and* Alex Ratcharge—who were, by cosmic coincidence, in London at the same time as me—*and* hang out and chat for hours with thee Tony Gunnarsson, who is simply the coolest! (Hopefully a new issue of *More Noize* is dropping soon!) After so many years of online communication with all three of them, it was exciting to be in the same city all together, getting drinks, catching up, talking about *MRR*, our projects, and future plans! The whole crew of punks I've been with in London has been super friendly and welcoming. I definitely look forward to hanging out with them again.

***

Bollocks! I've just missed my coach to Bristol. Fucking train sat for 20 minutes outside Victoria *not moving!* As I ran towards the coach station, my chest burning, my feet feeling like cement blocks, I worked myself into a panic attack before even reaching my gate, where of course there stood *no coach*. I paced back and forth outside the station, chain-smoking until my hands were numb from the cold and I was calm enough to speak to another human without either bursting into tears or punching them in the face. "Nah, next bus is fully booked, I'm 'fraid." Ugh, OK, then the *next* one, when's that? "Three hours from now." Right on, no harm done, beer before noon it is! I also urgently needed to change my bloody tampon but had no change. Even peeing in London is expensive, fuckinelle! So I bought more cigarettes and shoved my 30p into the slot with vengeance. Here, take it! Now can I go freak out in peace?

Three hours later, finally in my seat, looking grim and feeling like I've just been run over by a red double decker bus, I listen to MOLLY NILSSON to calm myself down. I am basically here to visit family I haven't seen in years, but also to look into potential job opportunities. As I stare out the window, contemplating the pros and cons of living—nay, surviving—in a place like London, I wonder if perhaps I'm fooling myself into thinking it's even possible. Can I hack it? Do I even really want it? Fuck… *what do I want?* I wake up in Bristol to a drizzling sky. I'm so ready for a few days of peace and quiet with my aunt and uncle! After six years, it'll be good to see them again and catch up. Life is short, time flies, and terminal illnesses really put things into perspective, so I'm taking each day at a time and appreciating the fact that I'm alive and well. "Got my neck, got my boobs. Got my heart, got my soul." I've got life and that's more than enough right now. Others aren't so lucky.

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Today I've just spent the day walking around the Lanes, thumbing through records and spending too much money. I'm in Brighton, which is hella charming; a vast contrast to the hustle and bustle of London—an hour and a world apart. It is of course quite graphic—with its neat rows of houses arching up the hill, its narrow streets and famous pier—despite the fancy mall stretches and modern constructions on the seafront. It has a good selection of record stores, all within walking distance of each other—and the Hope and Ruin pub. I didn't even go to half of them, but my favorite so far was the Record Album. Not because it had some bonzer punk records or anything. I liked it because it was real *niche*; run by 86-year-old George Ginn, an ex-8mm travel videographer, who is the definition of adorable English granddad with an encyclopedic knowledge of classical / orchestral / soundtrack music. The shop has been around since 1948 and specializes in film soundtracks, stage, musical, and high quality classical recordings, with a world reputation for having OOP and discontinued records. There was a lot in there I could have bought, but decided the OST to *Vamp* with Grace Jones was good enough.

However, I blew most of my Queen Es at Monkey Music Emporium (thanks, Tadpole Records, for the suggestion!), and it was well worth the visit. The wall alone was impressive (you coulda blown a month's rent and still only have a handful of them), and the chap who runs it is friendly enough, busy cleaning old record players. My best find was *An Electric Storm* by the WHITE NOISE, when trailblazer Delia Derbyshire was still a member. I also visited Across the Tracks (nothing life-changing at first glance, but enough to check out) and the Singles Bar (loads of movie soundtracks and, you guessed it, singles). With dirty fingers and an empty stomach, I was ready to chow down south

Indian food and get cozy with the cider...: though vodka eventually won the debate (Hint, it usually does.). I was hyper as always, and even though I'd spend almost two weeks bumbling about London, somehow I wasn't yet exhausted. At such great heights it's easier to envision flight than impact.

So it's 3 AM and I'm still awake. Can't get no satisfaction. Sleepless in Brighton on a Monday night and the beachside chippy is closed. Woulda killed for more chips and curry sauce—the greatest food combo to rock my world since I discovered pineapple on pizza! Thanks Paco! So I walk down to the beach, not a human in sight. I'm drunk and I've just lit a joint and, even though it's the end of February, I'm quite warm in my underwear and long coat. All I can hear is the rhythmic crashing of the waves and the shrieks and squawks of the seagulls. I can see their dark bodies outlined against the bright and cloudless sky. The moon is full and the stars are out—what a night to be alive. It's the first time in a long time that my mind's not racing or that my body's not on the go somewhere ("Victoria line all the time"). For an hour I sit on the cool rock, almost perfectly still, staring at the sky, trying to think of *nothing*: "The delicate illusions that get us through life can only stand so much strain."

ENDNOTES:

1) Now I am back at my temp home base in Athens, staying with my sis. Making fresh orange juice every morning, cooking (though poorly), catching up on the last four years, getting tipsy on wine binge watching sitcoms (Ilana Glazer, I love you!), hanging out with my parents, celebrating my 30th birthday—life could be much, much, *much* worse, so I am extremely grateful to all the people whose life I whirl-winded through these past couple months; who let me crash on their couch, fed me their mum's chicken soup and showed me around, who shared drinks and drugs, put up with my highs and lows, and generally tolerated my intense existence! Wherever I am, you are welcome!

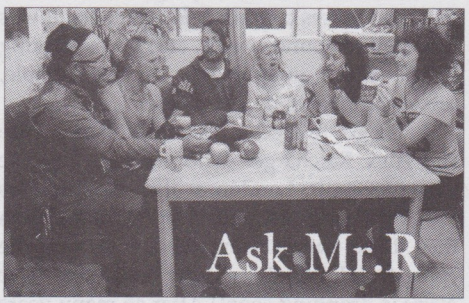
2) Looking forward to RIXE in Athens this weekend! It's also carnival, so it's gonna get messy! Their new EP is coming out soon on LVEUM, so keep an ear out for it, first track is up on the label's bandcamp page, and it's banging!

3) By the time you read this, another radio show will be up on das blog. I'm preparing shows with Japanese HC and punk, bands that played the *MRR* fest (I heard y'all had fun!), women in music that have inspired me (because every day is International Women's Day!), a film soundtrack special (long live Ennio Morricone), a synth-wave / post-punk special from Greece in the '80s, plus much more! Stay tuned at obsessionism.wordpress.com.

4) Habi from NE! Records and I have been working on the second part of the Yugoslavian punk special, and it'll be inking your fingers in these pages soon, so check it out! KAOS from Rijeka are gonna be in it, so I'm extra excited! I still remember when their record came through *MRR*—raw, passionate, inimitable!

5) By the time you read this, I'll be on the road again, this time vanning it round the UK with DIÄT, then heading back to Berlin with them for a few days. So excited to go to a bunch of places I've never been before and help spread the Positive Energy. The lovely Michael Kasparis of Night School Records, TLF, Anxiety, and Apostille has invited me to DJ the Glasgow show—on a penumbral lunar eclipse, too—I'm positively ecstatic! Hopefully next column will be a report back from all the rad places we went through! Until next time, stay punk, stay strong!

lydia@maximumrocknroll.com



I don't think anyone should take advice, but there are probably a lot of things for the punks to talk about, and we might as well do it here. Think of it more as an opinion *column, though. (And if we need a tagline for that, I hope it can be something as vague as "A column for people who are intrigued by subtle differences between the 'punks' and the 'punx'.")*

Text a question to 510-585-HELP (510-585-4357)! Or send a regular assed email to askmrr@mail.com. If you are sending a question that is time sensitive, let me know so that I can get you a timely response!

In several instances in my life, I feel like I am trying to balance being polite/socially acceptable with being a good friend/ truthful. How do you make these types of decisions? For example, one of my friends is in a totally shitty relationship and she asks me for advice about it constantly but never changes her behavior. Sometimes I feel like I should be that person that shakes her and says, "Enough is enough of this bullshit...I'm putting my foot down and you need to stop fucking around with this idiot." But like also this could be part of her journey? And it's kinda embarrassing if I go all "balls to the wall" about it and she decides to stay!

The problem with my other friend is she is partying too much and not taking care of herself. Now, I'm no teetotaler or anything and this is not a judgment about her drinking and doing drugs. It's more that it is dangerous to her (she is drinking and driving regularly, having unprotected sex with weirdo strangers on the reg) making her a shitty and one-dimensional friend. She comes to me for care taking and comfort and complains about how she needs to slow down. It's frustrating for me on a couple of levels. I only see her *after* a bender (I never get to be her fun friend, LOL). Also our relationship is one-dimensional—like she uses me for this nurturer role and our friendship never matures. Having an honest convo with her could go one of two ways: She would legit change her ways or she would cut me off totally.

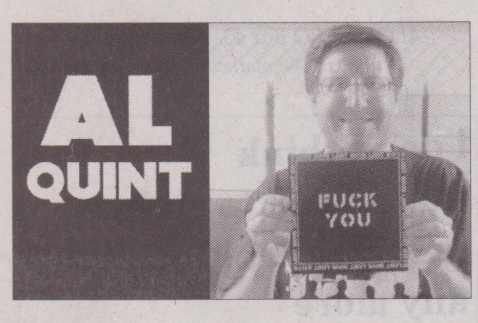
So to start, a thing that should be said about being frustrated by one-sided, one-dimensional, zero-growth friendships is that you can also be the person who decides to no longer pursue them. If you feel as though you are being drained for your patience and your sympathy and are unable to speak openly and truthfully to your friend, making the decision to just stop investing doesn't have to be left up to the other person or used as a possible punishment for saying the wrong thing during your weekly consoling responsibilities. You are actually allowed to stop engaging in things that make you feel bad.

I mean, walking away from a real friendship that is just going through some shitty times is obviously not that easy, but it's good to take a second to distinguish between the two before you figure out a solution, right? Is this person your real friend? Conversely, what part of you is so insistent that these people take your advice anyway? How sure are you that you are actually wanting what's best for your friends? Are you genuinely *mostly* worried about the alcohol and drug intake, or are you *more* bummed out that you're being stuck in the role of homebody nurturing friend? I'm sure that it really is hard to distinguish what's happening in that gray area, but making the choice to hardline your talks using tough love when part of you just wanted to be invited to the self-destructive party is also not a way to finally speak honestly to the situation. You don't have to make a decision between polite / socially acceptable and good friend / truthful in these kind of situations. Telling your truth doesn't have to be hard on a person to be effective, and being a good friend never involves issuing ultimatums about their behavior. Yes, it's true that if you bad mouth their partner for whatever reason (good necessary reasons like they are physically or emotionally abusive, or for pointless reasons like they aren't into the Ramones [who we established a couple of months ago are not a good way to gauge a person's total accrued

punk points]), you do run the risk of creating distance in your friendship when/if they do decide to stay together. But you still have the ability to be honest with them.

If shit is sensitive, you can try to talk to them in a way that acknowledges the things that they have told you instead of what you think is happening. For example, instead of saying "Todd sux" you can say "It sounds like the way Todd acts has been making you feel bad in [specifics]." But seriously, seriously, it is not necessary to stay in friendships with people who are using your ability to be sympathetic for their own gain. Everything is technically part of these other friend's "journey" or whatever, you aren't going to derail anything by speaking compassionate truth: they'll grow from their good relationships, their bad relationships, and even from the times they alienated their friendships by neglecting the person's feelings and dominating the whole conversation with their own complaints until they were finally either called out about it or burned out most of the ears that had been previously available to them. Everything is *technically* a lesson to learn, so don't feel like you gotta sell yourself short in order to experience the Groundhog Day of somebody else's emotional world.

I love answering these emotional friend questions like I'm Ask Amy *or something just sitting right there between the crossword and the jumble.*
Send more, please.
Text to 510-585-HELP
Email: askmrr@mail.com



Conservative Punks And Vulgar Talking Yams

I've been avoiding political topics in my column for a bit because, let's face it, it's a lot more fun talking about music than the craziness surrounding this year's elections. Things might have changed by the time this issue is in your hands, but it's mind-boggling that someone not just hinting at but expressing brazenly racist, xenophobic, and misogynist viewpoints (for starters) has a chance at getting the nomination of one of the country's major political parties. I don't know if I want to even mention him by name—a Spanish language newspaper that Ellen and I were reading at our favorite burrito place did exactly that. The great *Esquire* columnist Charlie Pierce has an unsurpassed knack for coming up with appropriate nicknames for political figures. His moniker for Sarah Palin was Princess Dumbass Of The Northwoods. Michele Bachmann was The Girl With The Faraway Eyes. His name for you-know-who is the Vulgar Talking Yam. Perfect.

What's sad is there are people involved in the punk scene who support this fascist (note I didn't say Nazi—fascist is probably a better description). I realize punk is different things to different people—and I have a pretty broad definition of punk that embraces many different styles—but I'd argue that most people reading this zine would concur that it means anti-authoritarian, anti-nationalist, anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-homophobic and so on. The fact that the VTY (or Donald Drumph, as comedian John Oliver has dubbed him) is getting some love from punk and hardcore people is quite dispiriting. You see these "punk" Drumph fans ridiculing those who believe health care should be a right and not a privilege or believe that secondary education should be accessible to everyone. They believe that if you're only making minimum wage, you probably don't have the skills or inclination to better yourself and don't deserve more.

Conservatives being involved in punk really isn't anything new. I've touched on it a few times over my eleven-plus years as a columnist. Johnny Ramone was a rock-ribbed conservative, Mark Adkins from GUTTERMOUTH, Michale Graves, and Dave Smalley from DYS, DAG NASTY, ALL and DOWN BY LAW are also on the right side of the political spectrum. So is Joe Escalante from the VANDALS. Anthony from KILLING TIME used to describe himself as a Goldwater Republican, but these days he says he is "extremely independent."

Smalley actually described his political viewpoints to me as libertarian. He also tried to engage me in a conversation about different economic ideologies, coming to the conclusion that the Milton Friedman school (i.e. supply side, the cornerstone of the free market bullshit that's been peddled since the early '80s) is superior to the more liberal Keynesian school. I told him I wasn't in the mood. I should have sicced my cousin Richard on him. Richard is an economics professor at Wesleyan and has degrees from Harvard and the London School of Economics. I've never had an in-depth discussion with Richard about economics but know he doesn't believe in austerity measures. I'm guessing he'd be able to handle Dave quite easily. Better than I could. Adkins was bragging in an interview about how he supported a candidate in the 2000s who was part of the racist Minuteman Project. That's a group that patrols the US/Mexican border to prevent undocumented immigrants from getting into the country.

Someone I know occasionally shares the "thoughts" of the vocalist for a pretty good NYC hardcore band from the early '90s (no, not AGNOSTIC FRONT or the CRO-MAGS—this was later) and they're rather disturbing. They're rather enraging and weak, if you'd like a clue. He's called liberalism a mental disease and disparaged Black Lives Matter (he had the #whitelivesmatter hashtag in one post). His other posts have been blatantly racist, homophobic, and xenophobic, albeit sometimes couching it in pseudo-intellectual drivel. On public schools, he says "the principal doesn't understand how elitism benefits us all...they must keep the uneducable scum from assaulting the top performers. 'But we have to be fair to the other students.' Yes you do. And fair is removing the others from the school if they won't get with the program." Nice, huh?

Enough of Vulgar Talking Yams and reactionary right-wingers. Time to play some loud music...

Vulgar Music For Vulgar Times

Maybe not all vulgar, although I'm sure there are people who adhere to Drumpf's or other GOPig candidates' ideologies who might find this month's selections vulgar. And that's just fine.

The always-reliable Beach Impediment Records have unleashed another pair of crucial platters. Pittsburgh band BLOOD PRESSURE's debut 12" *Need To Control* is nothing complicated—this is just full-tilt hardcore bile with a Swedish/D-Beat drive. Savage riffery, full-throated vocals, and executed with a single-minded relentlessness without a break to catch your breath, except when flipping the record over. In short, it kicks fucking ass. STRUTTER are from Austin and have members from such heavy hitters as GLUE, VAASKA, and IMPALERS, and it's closer to Glue's snotty hardcore punk thump, coming from more of an '80s impulse. Four loud'n'fast rippers and tucked inside a colorful sleeve that would make you think it's going to be a trippy excursion—well, the sputtering outro has a bit of a damage effect, but that's after you've been pummeled by the band's straightforward aggression. (Beach Impediment, beachimpedimentrecords.bigcartel.com)

NO PAROLE are a meat'n'potatoes Oi! band from New Jersey and could have been on Headache Records back in the day. Your basic boot party with tough-sounding vocals and semi-tuneful arrangements. Pretty basic fodder, some catchy licks here and there, especially on "Grey Skies," but there's nothing all that outstanding about it. (matwrecords.com)

MOMMY are one of the more entertaining live bands I've seen in recent months, an animated, raspy vocalist accompanied by

drums and distorted bass. Kind of like early RUDIMENTARY PENI filtered through the CRAZY SPIRIT/NYC bung gene pool and that comes out brashly on their five-song self-titled 7" on Toxic State. The typical top-notch packaging, including a fold-out poster and lyric booklet that intersperses the words (which read more like poetry than typical lyrics) with mental health reports. That's the overall concept—someone going through a mental health episode and having to be hospitalized. I think that's what it is, anyway. I'm not sure if it's based on personal experiences, but I think the PENI comparison is apt, given Nick Blinko's mental health travails. (Toxic State, katorgaworks.bigcartel.com)

Massholes ANEURYSM's three-song *Veronica* EP serves up some dark'n'scary rock. Thick and tumultuous and, yes, there's a whiff of early '90s heaviness (notice I didn't say grunge), but it's more twisted-sounding. "Dio, Priest and Maiden" won't make you think of any of those bands, as this ain't no NWOBHM trip unless you want to call it New Wave Of Bashing Head Music. A chaotic mess, and that's not necessarily a bad thing. (Tor Johnson, torjohnsonrecords.com)

S/ICKS (or SICKS) are a Pittsburgh band including people from KIM PHUC (an underrated band you should explore), CAUSTIC CHRIST, and others. The two 7"s their guitarist Eric was nice enough to send me—*Cut Bait/Enemies List* on Mind Cure and *Pretty Plastic/Dose* on Fair Warning—came out in mid-2015, but it's some quality swill. In a similarly nervy vein as KIM PHUC, with stinging and beefy guitar riffs and a solid rhythmic punch to go along with Rob's cutting vocals, all of it at a steady mid-tempo clip, although "Dose" slows it down a bit. (Mind Cure, mindcurerecords.com; Fair Warning, fairwarningrecords.bandcamp.com)

Boston band EXIT ORDER have been around for a few years and finally have some vinyl out there for public consumption. Their self-titled 7" features far superior production to their demo and it brings their no-nonsense hardcore punk into bold relief, adding a few other elements. A slight effect on the guitar, along with pumping bass and quick-handed drumming accompanying Anna's pealing vocals. EXIT ORDER includes members with long resumes—NO TOLERANCE, LEATHER DADDY, LIMP WRIST, GREEN BERET, BRAIN KILLER and others and doesn't sound specifically like any of those bands. Closing track "Order" has a slightly more anarcho-punk feel and that's filtered through other songs as well. (Side Two, 6 Wadleigh Pl, Boston, MA 02127, side-two.com)

From San Diego, FANTASY ARCADE counts people from LIFE CRISIS and DEATH CRISIS in their ranks and, on their self-titled 7" EP, it's a heavier, doomier sound. Big riffs and laying down a rhythmic thud, interspersed with bursts of speed, the tongue is planted into the cheek a bit, and I didn't even recognize their piss-take thrashed up "Poison Arrow" as a cover song from '80s lightweights ABC. Or more accurately, they take the lyrics from that song and add their own music. Unfortunately, all this adds up to something not terribly enticing. (Too Old To Die, fantasyarcade.bandcamp.com)

Next up is a compilation from Tsuguri Records—*The Transcendental Maggot's Revenge*. Some good moments, although old-timers the UGLY AMERICANS' mid-tempo "Pony Picture" oozes grunge-era rock and not necessarily in a good way. The other veteran band, FLAG OF DEMOCRACY, fare better with their tuneful'n'hyperkinetic hardcore—they've never lost a step. TOE TAG is Blaine from the ACCÜSED's latest band, and they dish out some passable metal-tinged thrash metal. CLASSHOLE's track has a bit of a BL'AST feel, and BEIGE EAGLE BOYS offer up some butt-shakin' rock'n'roll on their song. (Tsuguri, 9487 Holly Ridge Ct., Hildebran, NC 28637, tsugurirecords.blogspot.com)

Finally, I was recently leaving a show in Salem that featured an all-too-brief eight-song JERRY'S KIDS reunion set (yes, that was a surprise last minute thing and quite a birthday present for yours truly and I'm sorry I'm gloating about it) and a gentleman by the name of Paolo gave me the two latest issues of his *Never Was Turned Has Been* zine and a homemade cassette compilation, *Section 12*. The two issues are half-size, cut and paste efforts. Issue #3 includes a diary of Paolo's time spent in a psych hospital as well as short interviews with WASTE MANAGEMENT, PROTESTER, and TAKE CONTROL, along with record, demo, zine, and show reviews. Number 4 has an interview with Chris Wood, aka Sid Sludge from MENTAL ABUSE, and more reviews.

I do have a bit of a bone to pick about his essay about '80s hardcore and him saying "most old punks are stupid." And he also goes off on the FU's *My America*, calling the members "plain ignorant." Here's the whole thing with the FU'S and *My America* once and for all. I'd imagine many of you figured it out by now, but it was a total wind-up, some button-pushing. They weren't jocks or rednecks or frat-boys. John Sox and Steve Grimes are both well-educated and quite liberal/left-wing in their ideology and had a wicked sense of humor. This will probably make Tim Yo's head explode, wherever he is, but *My America* is the second best hardcore album to ever come out of Boston (JERRY'S KIDS' *Is This My World* will always be #1 in my book). The breakdown in "What You Pay For" still makes me want to wreck everything in sight. And they even say you're fools to look to any punk band as some sort of savior.

Sorry I got sidetracked. Anyway, the cassette compilation is a throwback mixtape of '80s US bands, both well-known and lesser-known, with the more obscure SLUGGO, YOUTH KORPS, and KILLING CHILDREN sharing space with the likes of ARTICLES OF FAITH, the FREEZE, SOCIAL UNREST, and DIE KREUZEN. If you're interested, contact Paolo at paolojbt@gmail.com.

Shawn Wenzel R.I.P.

Cancer has claimed another friend of mine, Shawn Wenzel, who passed away in February. He was only 40 years old and left behind two boys. Shawn was from Ohio and was in a band called XenduranceX in the early '90s. He was a total punk rock lifer—he never lost his enthusiasm for the music and managed to maintain an upbeat attitude while he was no doubt suffering immensely. Like my friend Chelle, who passed away just about a year ago, Shawn had been ill for quite some time. I never had the pleasure of meeting him in person, but we'd corresponded online for several years. When Ellen and I were in a bit of a financial crunch last year and I was selling records and CDs out of my collection, Shawn bought a *ton* of stuff from me and offered to send more money to help us out. I declined—in fact, I sent him a lot more than he ordered—and told him he should look after his own needs first. But that's the kind of guy he was. The outpouring of tributes after his passing showed that I wasn't alone in my love and respect for him.

R.I.P. my friend.

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i don't think that i need to sit here with you fucking dildos any more

by Imogen Binnie

Do you ever think about the way you used to dress when you were in high school? Sometimes I look back and I'm like, whoa. We didn't have a ton of money, so I spent a lot of time at the thrift store, and by necessity I learned to do all that seamstress stuff. And I got pretty good at it—by the time I was a senior, I was tailoring everything I wore. But it's funny. When I look back on that time now, I basically just dressed like a weird old lady. I mean, it was a different time. This was back in the mid-'80s, when punk had basically been replaced by hardcore, riot grrrl hadn't happened yet, metal was at like the worst

place it would ever be, and most importantly, there was no internet yet. We were also all pretty sure that any minute Russia was going to bomb us out of existence. I mean, I guess when I spell it out, that doesn't add up to dressing like a weird grandma. But like. Think Morrissey in the Smiths—the way that guy looked, that music, it all seemed very cool at the time. My best friend dressed like a supercharged Morrissey, with the hair, these bonkers shiny blazers, and fancy white leather old man shoes. It was awesome.

I mean, I know now that those looks were objectively terrible. But sometimes I still feel nostalgic for them.

High school fucking sucked, dude. Like I said, we were pretty broke. My mom left when I was pretty young and my dad couldn't really hold a job, which meant my part time job at this record store was our only real income. Our house was small and dumpy and in a pretty bad part of town, but I still can't believe we could eat and pay our rent from the money I made at my after school job. I have no idea how we did it.

I don't know. I've just been thinking about high school a lot. I guess specifically I'm thinking about how weird I used to dress because I used to think I looked really cool, but everybody could still tell that I was poor. They gave me a ton of shit about it. I guess this has always been true in America, but the class stratification in my town was fucking brutal—it felt like there were rich assholes who ran the whole fucking school, kids who didn't matter, and then us: the targets of those judgmental rich kids.

Specifically, me and that friend I was talking about before. Duckie.

We got so much shit from these rich assholes—which is why it was so weird that I ended up sort of falling in love with one of them.

Blane.

It was confusing. He drove a fucking BMW. Duckie was sure that it wouldn't work out, but I was really, really into Blane. There was just something about him, I don't even know what it was. He was cute, for sure, but there was also something...tentative, maybe, about the way that he was trying to own his privilege. When we first started dating, he was really bad at standing up to his classist friends, but you could tell there was something there—something that wanted to do better, to learn to do better. And I'm not gonna lie. I didn't want to date him for his money, but there really was something romantic, something exciting about dating someone who could just buy you dinner or whatever and not think twice about it.

You might be ashamed of it, but if you've ever been truly, scrapingly broke, you probably have some idea of what I'm talking about. Only rich people think money doesn't matter.

Anyway, Duckie was always warning me. He fucking hated Blane. I'd known Duckie since we were kids, and we'd always been really close. On some level I guess I knew that he was in love with me—had probably been in love with me since we were kids—but I just wasn't into him that way. There was something immature about him. Ironically, in a way, since he hated Blane for being rich (and therefore, Duckie assumed, entitled), there was something entitled about Duckie himself that turned me off. I mean he was fun to hang out with and had great taste in music, looked cool and would just show up at the record store and bust out a lip-sync routine to Otis Redding or whatever. We all loved him. But I just... I wasn't into him that way. I don't know.

The first night that me and Blane went on a date, his friends were worse than ever to me. We went to a party at his friend Steff's house and it was just brutal. They didn't hold back at all, they just called me poor and ugly and trash and everything else you could think of. And to his credit, Blane was like, forget this, and we left. He was like, well, let's go hang out where you hang out, so we ended up at the club where the New Wave and weird '80s white people reggae bands we were into would play. It really opened up my eyes, in a way, to see the way the punkers and metalheads who hung out there—and especially Duckie—treated Blane. You know? I mean, there was definitely a class dynamic there. Blane looked rich. So you could expect that kind of thing from the spiky-headed punkers or the leather rebels or whoever.

But Duckie was just horrible to Blane. He was supposed to be my best friend, to have my back no matter what, but instead he was just *mean* to Blane. It was the worst. We ended up leaving the club, too, and our date sort of limped along for the rest of the night.

In the weeks leading up to it, I'd been talking to Iona, the woman who owned the record store where I worked, who I guess was also kind of a surrogate mother figure for me, about how I felt shitty for wanting to go to prom. I mean, I know prom's not punk, and I felt silly for wanting to go, but I also just had this feeling like I'd regret it for the rest of my life if I didn't. And Iona didn't help—she told me this story like "I have this girlfriend who didn't go to hers, and every once in a while, she gets this really terrible feeling—you know, like something is missing. She checks her purse, and then she checks her keys. She counts her kids, she goes crazy, and then she realizes that nothing is missing. It was side effects from skipping the prom." I was like, thanks Iona. But still? This stuff was on my mind, and at the end of our otherwise disastrous date, Blane asked me to go with him. I said yes.

Fucking Duckie, though.

He could have supported me, been on my team, but instead he came out with this fucking "I've always loved you, I've always wanted to be with you, how dare you betray me" entitled whiny MRA bullshit. You know? Classic friendzone, "I was nice to you so you owe me your body and your energy and your life forever" bullshit. I mean, he dressed it up as class analysis, but we all know what happens when anarchist dudes dress their entitlement-as-dudes up as radical political analysis, right? It does not end well. I got so mad at him. I kind of lost my shit.

Reader, I murdered him.

I killed Duckie. And honestly? I don't regret it. I have never regretted it. When I think about the emotional labor women do in relationships (whether they're romantic or familial or work relationships or whatever other ones) and the way that it just gets ignored. Erased. The way he just assumed that I'd always be there for him, that I'd always be there to hold his feelings, when the one time I asked for something from him—that he'd just bite his tongue about his class politics for one fucking night and be nice to this guy I was really into—he couldn't even do it for five fucking minutes. When I think about not only the fact that Duckie couldn't put his overwhelming entitlement (his entitlement to *me*, to my whole self) away for five minutes, but also that it seems sometimes like no man in the world can bother to think about this stuff—that some days it feels like all men just want all women to be their fucking mothers, forever—I honestly wish I could kill Duckie all over again.

I pinned the murder on the bouncer from the New Wave club, this Andrew "Dice" Clay looking motherfucker. He deserved it. I mean, he had the Andrew "Dice" Clay hair and jeans and jacket and stuff, but he also had the misogyny and the entitlement, too. He deserved to get a murder pinned on him. Fuck that guy.

Me and Blane struggled after that first date. We didn't talk for almost a month; he basically caved to his rich friends. I knew he wasn't ashamed to be dating me, exactly, but he definitely wasn't a strong enough person to cope with the shit his friends were giving him about dating me. He gave me this terrible excuse about having forgotten that he'd invited someone else before he'd invited me, which we both knew was pathetic, and I was like, fine. Fuck you, dude.

I talked about it with Iona a lot, though. She was the best. (She married a yuppie. They're very rich and happy now. I see them on Facebook all the time with their organic garden and six kids. She deserves it.) When I told her I was thinking about going to prom by myself, she was super encouraging. She actually gave me her old prom dress and I was like, okay, I'm gonna do this. I'm just

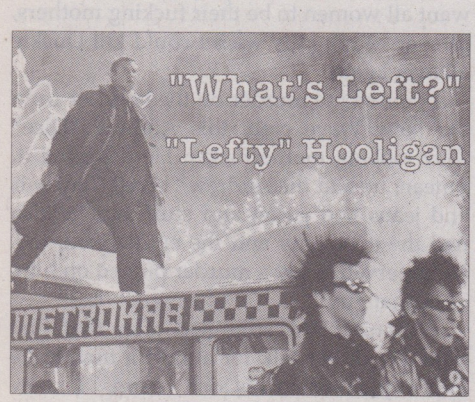
going to walk into prom and walk out, just so I can say I did it. And I guess also to show those rich assholes that they couldn't break me.

My dad ended up buying me a prom dress too. Now I had two prom dresses, which I guess a lot of eighteen year old trans girls would tell you was pretty exciting, but like I said before, I'd gotten pretty good at tailoring clothes. I used the material from both dresses to make a new, amazing dress to wear to prom.

Well, long story short, I went to prom. Blane was there and so were all his friends. He came up to me and apologized for being an asshole, then found something important inside himself, went up to his rich friends, and told them to fuck off. Unlike Duckie, he did not expect me just to forgive him; instead, he knew he'd messed up and he knew it wasn't my job to forgive him. He just left the prom. Just walked out to the parking lot.

I followed him. I kissed him in the humid, misty night, under a streetlight—next to his BMW—and we've been together ever since.

But like I said, I've been thinking a lot about how I used to dress back in high school. I think Duckie might have gotten some small, final revenge on me, like maybe his blood got on the scissors I murdered him with and he managed to haunt them or something. After all, I used those scissors to make the dress I wore to the prom. And when I look back on it now, I wince. My prom dress was *hideous*.



[Covering the primary elections is like trying to nail jell-o to the wall, an almost impossible task. Last column I predicted that evangelical voters will go for Rubio, Cruz, or Bush, and largely pass over Trump. I was wrong. Evangelicals are flocking to Trump, against their church leadership and their professed Biblical morality. More surprises to come, I'm sure.]

I'm the first to admit that living in the Bay Area, between freewheeling San Francisco and the Peoples Republic of Berkeley and post-Occupy Oakland, my politics don't really stand out. And living in California, with its Democratic Party hegemony and progressive social bent, means that my politics are also often an indulgence, me being able to honor a picket line when the union movement is essentially dead, or vote for Bernie Sanders while not affecting Hillary's inexorable win one iota.

So, on viewing the 2016 elections from my Left Coast perspective, I tend to oversimplify matters and maybe dumb down certain aspects of American politics. Like in emphasizing the chaos in the Republican camp versus the dull inevitability on the Democratic side, I gloss over the relentless shift of those politics to the right in the last 45 odd years, something I've emphasized in previous columns. Even with the ongoing melee in the GOP, Republicans are on track to elect a significant majority of conservative state governments. That's because, although there are more registered Democrats than Republicans nationwide, Republicans vote more consistently. So while both parties turn out in force for national elections, Republicans also vote heavily in mid-term elections while Democrats don't. Thus Republicans choose more of the state governors and legislatures which then control the process of redistricting in each state which then further skews state-level elections toward the Republicans. If the GOP retains its hold of either the House or the Senate, and perhaps both, about the only thing the Democrats will control outright is the presidency. Hillary's seemingly unstoppable bid to be the next president is not merely a triumph of the lesser of two evils, but a potential right-of-center Democratic Party victory that fulfills Bill Clinton's New Democrat turn towards neoliberalism. Obama was never the "great black hope" of American progressives so much as a middle-of-the-road Democrat treading water while the rightwing tide steadily rises. Hell, Bernie Sanders ain't even all that progressive when it comes to gun control or Black Lives Matter or Israel or military interventionism.

Gloating over the collapse of the Republicans then does not mean celebrating a Democratic victory. And there's no joy to be found in third party politics, whether in alternative ones like the Greens or Libertarians, mildly leftist ones like the Peace and Freedom or the Socialist Party, or even vanguardist ones like the Workers World Party or Party for Socialism and Liberation. America's 50%+1 winner-take-all electoral system virtually ensures that only two political parties dominate the political process by favoring the middle-of-the-road, thus marginalizing all other electoral contenders. Third parties do persist, but they have little to no chance of directly influencing politics, let alone gaining power. Or, they do so well that they actually replace one of the two main parties, as when the Republican Party replaced the Whig Party to face off against the Democratic Party. But breaking the two-party monopoly with a more European, parliamentary system isn't in the cards.

What third parties are good for is fucking with the two parties currently alternating in power. Third parties hope to move the main party with which they identify further to the political extreme—left or right—as when George Wallace ran as an American Independent Party candidate in 1968 hoping to capture the white working-class Democratic vote that Trump now garners so effortlessly. But Wallace didn't make much of a difference in Nixon's landslide victory of that year. Instead, third parties are often the spoilers in a heated two-party contest, as when Ross Perot's Reform Party cost Bush Senior a second term in 1992 against Bill Clinton, or Ralph Nader's campaign as the Green Party presidential candidate in 2000 cost Al Gore the White House against Bush Junior.

Sometimes, just the threat of an independent third party run can cause political turmoil, as when Donald Trump—whose ongoing campaigns virtually guarantees that the Republican National Convention will be a contested one—threatened to mount a third party breakaway effort upon rumors the GOP establishment intended to broker the convention to favor a predetermined outcome. New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg is currently exploring a third party presidential run if Trump wins the Republican primary and Sanders wins the Democratic endorsement. Being a moderate Democrat-become-Republican-become-Independent, Bloomberg is a socially liberal (pro-abortion, gay marriage, and gun control), fiscally conservative (small government, lower taxes) politician, meaning he doesn't have a chance to be nominated by either party in the best of circumstances.

There is something to be said for the more, the merrier. Certainly, the chaos of a split or contested GOP convention, with the potential for third party splintering, all but hands Hillary the presidency. But she can still lose. If Trump manages to secure the nomination on the first vote, there is a chance he can defeat Clinton. Paradoxically, Hillary's juggernaut is built around a weak candidacy, one which lots of people dislike, even as they grudgingly support her. And if Trump manages the impossible and unites the shattered GOP behind a convention nomination, it's time to start practicing the Roman salute.

I commented at the beginning of this column that my voting for Bernie in California won't impact Hillary's campaign in the least. California holds its primaries in June, meaning that by the time I actually vote, the Democratic Party nomination will be pretty much sown up. That's on top of having to register as a Democrat to vote for Bernie in the first place. Used to be any registered California voter could vote in any qualified

political party's primary without restriction, whether or not said voter was a member of said party. Then, the state's two party Democratic/Republican duopoly passed legislation to restrict party primary voting to registered party members only, with the consequence that third party supporters had to decide between belonging to their party of choice or participating in the Democratic/Republican party primaries. Third party memberships plummeted state-wide as a result of these semi-closed primaries and many third parties, like the Peace and Freedom Party to which I belonged almost from its inception, now constantly struggle just to qualify for the ballot. In turn, parasitic vanguard parties, like the aforementioned Party for Socialism and Liberation or their sectarian front groups like the ANSWER Coalition, unable themselves to qualify for the general elections, take over vulnerable third parties like the Peace and Freedom in order to field their own leadership as political candidates.

So, I'm a reluctant Democrat. Even with a somewhat more progressive candidate like Bernie to vote for, I'm disinclined to give much more to the electoral process than my vote. Which is why I'm more than a bit irritated by all the bandwagon *Sandernistas* out there braying 24/7 about how Hillary is Satan incarnate and we all need to support Bernie unconditionally. I did my time promoting my share of Establishment politicians, everything from campaigning for George McGovern to phone-banking for Barack Obama. I'll give Sanders my vote come June, but all that crap about Bernie being the resurrected Eugene V. Debs and his democratic socialism being a classless utopia and his presidential candidacy being the fulfillment of the American dream is so childish as to be embarrassing. What's more, I'll also vote for Clinton in November solely to prevent a lunatic Republican from winning, without hope or guilt.

Returning to my oft-repeated observation that American politics has moved steadily to the right in my lifetime, let me exaggerate to make my point. There's this documentary—"Riot on the Dance Floor"—of the Trenton, New Jersey punk club, City Gardens, and Randy Now, the mailman who ran it. I think it's still in the Kickstarter stage of funding, but there's a 6-7 minute YouTube clip freely available. A much younger Jon Stewart is briefly interviewed by phone because he was a bartender at the Gardens in the mid-1980s, but the really interesting footage that accompanies his voice-over is of the extremely violent pit in the Gardens' shows. There's a particularly striking scene of what I call the skinhead wave, a human wall of mostly shirtless baldies that gathers at the back of the hall and then rushes *en masse* toward the stage, trampling everyone in its path until it crashes up against the people at the stage. Those who were a part of this skinhead wave, they were only a small minority of the visible crowds, yet they dominated that show with their violent antics. I experienced the skinhead wave when I lived in San Diego during the 80s at some of the larger venues, but I think it was mostly a phenomenon of larger scenes like LA or the East Coast.

The conservative shift in American politics over the last half century is like a slow-motion skinhead wave. Initiated by right-wing individuals who are a definite minority but who sweep all before them with their aggressive attacks, ultimately hoping to crush liberals and progressives against the stage of history, this turn to the right in the country's politics is deliberate and orchestrated. Just voting for Bernie Sanders won't accomplish much. And quoting Joe Hill's last words "Don't Mourn, Organize!" doesn't get us much further. It's a tired platitude, and actually, Joe's last words were "I don't want to be caught dead in Utah." If Trump is elected, it's a sentiment that many may apply to the whole US of A.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA...
My political blog is leftyhooligan.wordpress.com.
My personal blog is gamatiasz.wordpress.com.
My facebook page is facebook.com/GAMatiasz.
My email is hooligentsia@icloud.com.

"Words that destroy friendship
Cheap talk that doesn't mean shit
Lies only build to break..."
—Uniform Choice, "Build to Break"

"They say talk is cheap but I still can't afford it,
So tell me the truth or leave me alone."
—The A's, "Words"

"Give me a shocking din
And a babbling babble of fools
No more lies
No more bare faced lies."
—Poison Girls, "No More Lies"

Think of All the Hate There is in Red China
Lorda mercy! Punks are excused! Go spin that 40 outside, the adults need to talk. Last month's ska column was a big old fibber. Not a lick of troof! Couple things I need to clear up: First, to my knowledge, newest coordinator and hair model, Brendan Wells, is not a registered Weinercrat (but I'm sure he's got a Hillary sticker on his 10-speed—yuck!). Second: I have *not* read Lefty Hooligan's column all the way through...ever. And three: I still have the pleasure / responsibility / mandate to spread the word of Oi! in these renowned (though pusillanimous) newsprint-pages of *Maximum Rocknroll*.

Truthfully, it was nice to step away from the boots-and-braces set for a month. I had to cleanse the palate and take a break from that most-mighty of punk subgenres: Oi! No one understands how dangerous this "job" is. Non-stop exposure to Oi! can lead to such maladies as shredded knuckles (from dragging), advanced brow-sloping, and the development of unintentional nodding during Donald Trump speeches. And even though last month I was just jaggin yinz chains, it wasn't without casualties; Pope Girl had a few "Give 'em the muzak!" moments where she was sonically-forced by the ska-waves to vacate HQ with her hands over her ears, abandoning her own day-off activities (mostly twerking to hot jamz in the living room). I called it "collateral damage," she called it a "crime against her humanity." Hard times no more! Oi! once again fills these halls!

We'll try to get everything we missed last month and include all our most recent acquisitions. Onward, shaven soldiers!

CITY SAINTS/OLDFASHIONED IDEAS – split EP (Spirit of the Streets): Two bands, one country: Sweden! CITY SAINTS are from "the front side of Sweden" AKA Gothenburg, while OLDFASHIONED IDEAS hail from the "tip-of-the-dick" AKA Malmö. CITY SAINTS play well-produced big-sounding streetpunk with blazing streaks of '77 guitar leads. It's just aight. They offer up one original, "United We Stand," and a cover of the CRICKETS classic, "I Fought the Law" where they mash in some "Blitzkrieg Bop." It's a fine cover and probably a good time live. But on record, it's a throwaway. On "United We Stand" you are invited to have your brain blown with lyrics like, *"They won't break us again / Cuz united we stand / You and me and our friends against the others / We will take them all down / We will stand our ground / Together my blue collar brothers..."* I fell asleep on the keyboard even typing all that out. If you're gonna write boring lyrics, you better make the music interesting. CITY SAINTS probably fit in great on a 300-band summer festival in Germany. OLDFASHIONED IDEAS, on the other hand, deliver two gruff-but-melodic Oi! speedsters: "Above and Beyond" and "Oi! Ain't Dead" (not the C84 tune). The latter song is an indictment of the "Real Oi!" elitism that is prevalent in right-wing circles. OLDFASHIONED IDEAS have a new LP out soon on Contra Records, and the Gang and I

are looking forward to it. I'd pass on this and wait for that. *"Oi! ain't dead, but you're trying to kill it / You're trying hard to fill it with your stupid shit!"*

TRAITRE – *Discographie* CS (Thrash Zone Tapes) + *Dors Bien* EP (LADA Records) + *Humain En Vue / Un Pays à Détruire* (Build Me a Bomb): Eh, *merde*! Like a billion baguettes bashing your brain, TRAITRE (from Lille, France) and friends are letting loose this month with their brand of harsh, grim, and baleful punk'n'Oi! There are those who have been suspicious or maybe blasé about the attention French Oi! has been receiving lately. They ask, why now? They ask, where y'all been before? And I think Justin Briggs spoke truth in his top-ten review for RIXE's *Coups & Blessures* when he said, "...the general acceptance of Oi! music as a non-threatening punk trend for people with zero interest in actual skinhead culture or Oi!'s context or history is a massive turnoff..." The Gang and I couldn't agree more. That said, even if you are one of the many punks who looks like an unemployed kindergarten teacher or maybe a homeless RISD grad or you fancy yersself some sort of wave-snob, you need this band in your life. Like SYNDROME 81 (their closest contemporary in regards to sound and style) they cross genres and span subcultures.

First up: the discography! It collects all of TRAITRE's previous output (the five-song cassette, two 7"s, and two comp tracks) on one twelve-song tape. It's not fancy, just a J-card with a picture of train tracks on the cover, but it's an appreciated convenience that Thrash Zone took the time to put it out. Go listen and purchase at offsidetapes.bandcamp.com. As for the new stuff, purchase those too! Send all your money to France this month.

Dors Bein kicks off with "Je M'emmerde," a song that sounds like CAMERA SILENS covering the CURE. In fact, the whole EP is on the colder side of what TRAITRE has produced. The record closes out with the title track; a dogged and mostly slow-tempo'd growler that made me think of *Boy*-era U2…except sung and played with blood in the mouth.

The single out on Build Me a Bomb Records contains one original, "Humain En Vue," and a cover of L'INFANTERIE SAUVAGE's "Un Pays À Défendre" (A Country to Defend) which TRAITRE changes to "Un Pays À Détruire" (A Country to Destroy). I'm not from France, so I don't really care what the song is about but they do it justice. "Humain En Vue" is more upbeat with a classic French Oi! sound. Worth the shipping. No doubt. Hopefully this year they'll drop an LP so the gang and I don't have to keep buying this shit piecemeal. Go listen to everything at traitre.bandcamp.com. Bien!

OXLEY'S MIDNIGHT RUNNERS – *Combat* EP (Randale, Oi! The Boat): This is the third EP from Mike Oxley and crew. If ya don't know, OMR is the baby of Mr. Oxley from the long sweating FATSKINS and contains dudes from 90 PROOF and WARLORDS along with Lars Frederiksen (from little known Bay Area pluggers RANCID) on guitar. The music is bloody-knuckle rock'n'oi! similar to the FATSKINS, but less influenced by AGNOSTIC FRONT and more versed in EDDIE COCHRAN, though Mr. Oxley's gravel snarl is in full effect on these three songs. Side-A contains "We've Been Trumped," wherein the band zeros in on The Donald and gives him a piece of their mind, and "War Cries," which is about growing up in and around violence. Side-AA dishes up "Combat," which lets everyone know which side of the fence Mike Oxley stands on: *"Hide behind your veil of hate / You call it RAC / You rock against Communists / You label me PC / Wrap yourself with my flag / Just when it works for you / I'm the real American / And my bloodline it ain't pure..."* Hide your COMBAT 84 records when Mr. Oxley and crew come through. If you know about this record, you probably already got an opinion. Buy it or don't. If this is all news to you, OXLEY'S MIDNIGHT RUNNERS could be your introduction to 21st century American-Oi!

ULTRA – *Bay Area Babylon Mixtape* CS (self-released): I'm not sure about this. I like it. It reminds me of an Oi! version of the CARBONAS or maybe if VANITY recorded in a bedroom (or sounded like they did). This is jokey but not like PINK PANZER or the wretched JEWDRIVER and not as on point as OIL. Maybe this is how folks view this column; a little pompous, a little bumptious. Is ULTRA satire? I'm not sure if these dudes are skins at all. The cover is a xerox of Sinead O'Connor smoking (which I find funny) and the lyrics are jagged and almost postmodern (and funny). From the song "Spirit of 3069 BC": *"Jugs of wine and bowls of beer / We'll be drinking / Flipping off the ziggurat / And bovver's what we're thinking / ...If you're working for the ensi / We're stomping on your cuniform."* I mean, that shit is brilliant and it's delivered in such a blockhead fashion. Smart/dumb in the best ways. Navigate thru the matrix to livelifeultra.bandcamp.com and give these Oakland a-holes a couple bucks for their ten-song tape. *"We'll grow like aging rats underground / Or will we die or domesticate?"*

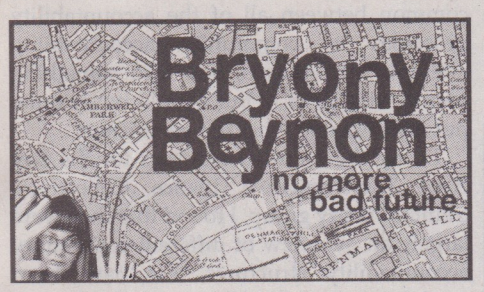
CURB STOMP – *Für Immer/Lucky Lucas* (Crowd Control Media, Contra Records): These German SHARPS (go to their Facefukk to order a "Curb Stomp: Refugees Welcome" shirt) are back with a short blast of Rhineland-Oi! After a moody intro to Side A, the band drops into a mid-tempo bounce on "Für Immer." You are treated to multiple refrains of *"Skinhead! Skinhead!"* and "whoa-oh-oh!" I'm normally not a big fan of new German Oi! but CURB STOMP have a sound that recalls first-wave Deutsch-Oi! bands like DIE ALLIERTEN or HERBÄRDS. Unlike many of their countrymen, their music is free of new-new-school Hardcore pastiche or beatdown breakdowns. Solid Oi! "Lucky Lucas" is a dusky punkabilly number (don't cringe!) that was a pleasant surprise. If you were ever a fan of the STAGGERS you'll probably enjoy this whole record.

FRED AND THE PERRYS – *Xa Non Hai Xustiza* EP (Common People Records, Secret Bridge): Whatta name! I love when bands just embrace the base. The new gang house-band is named LEVI JEANS WITH A ONE INCH CUFF. We suuuuuck! OK! FRED AND THE PERRYS are a band of baldos from Galicia, Spain. If you are tired of listening to new Oi! that sounds like roid-rage pop punk or if you crave raw battle-scarred Oi! this is the band for you. The recording is rough and dirty in an—I'm guessing—intentional way and has a solid Beat The System/Lightbeat sound. It's Oi! It's rock'n'roll. It's punk as shit. You get: "Estás Aí", "Xa Non Hai Xustiza", "No Corazón" and "Fillo De Lucifer" which is a TROTSKIDS cover I'm not familiar with. I don't even speak Spanish but I've listened to the 7" so many times I'm singing along to the opening song: *"Estás aí, Estás aí, Estás aí / Sempre aí se ti non, se ti non estás aí!"* I Goog'd it and I guess I've been repeatedly asking the cats "Are you there? Are you there?!" Great record.

THE OLD BREED – *Legend by Monday Morning* LP (Crowd Control Media): What we have here is a new band from Toledo, Ohio playing blue-collar streetpunk. Think: HUDSON FALCONS and GC5. The vocalist, Sam, sounds like Mark Linskey. This LP is basically their demo with a reworked layout and new artwork. I'm not sure if they re-recorded any tracks. If they didn't, I wish they had. I think this could have been a good record but instead it's an example of how to make an elementary and cliché streetpunk album. Eight out of the ten songs deal with being on the bottom of life and having to work harder than the rest to get what you deserve, which apparently amounts to a bar tab. *Legend by Monday Morning* makes me feel like I'm hanging out with my coworker that never stops complaining. I get it bro' you hate that you have to work. What else is new? Bellyaching can be cathartic but unproductive. If the band tightens up its playing, aims for conciseness and for more variety in lyrical content I think their next output could be a stunner.

Boom! We're done! No endnotes! Be back next month!

Send bitter rants to:
AmericanBootGang@Gmail.com



American February Part One

"Do you wanna go see Dee Dee?" So, we begin at Hollywood Forever. Zach's on the way to Mexico on his motorbike, we meet him where the streets are wide and straight. I try one, two...four cups of Cafe de Olla. Here's Johnny's statue (his ashes are at home with Linda) and over there, Dee Dee's real life corpse. We meet Isabella, she is learning to drive in a purple glittery hearse she drove here from Chicago. As a place of burial, the cemetery has none of the maudlin sanctity I usually brace myself for. Surrounded by graves, I still can't begin to imagine an interment here. How would grief fare on these well-kept lawns, would it wither in such bright sunshine or do the relatives of celebrities just keep their sunglass-eyes on glistening probate? This is a yesteryear type of place, no glitz, and I don't imagine Douglas Colvin died with much, overdosing as he did, failed rap career or no. Still, perhaps fame grants a slithery buffer from loss. There are many degrees of gone-ness, and maybe my unchecked eagerness to strike a pale pose next to Dee Dee's grave makes him that little bit less gone? Poor, rotting Ramone. A well-fingered headstone, a sign of immortality unlocked. Why be sad when you'll live forever? We grasp the talismans of the dead around our necks and take crayon rubbings of their inscriptions. There were ten turtles in the lake that looked like they had become caught in a net. Grace shook it and they swam free, basking thick gnarled shells in the strange heat. We open a miniature of whiskey that some sweet soul left behind the headstone and I lend Zach some lip balm to give Dee Dee's marble a fleshy farewell kiss, assuring him it's tinted. OK. We gotta go now.

In a little hire car sliding up the coast with me is Ben and Grace. We ease back into each other like three feet finding shoes. In a few short hours we're laced right up, giddy on new sights and old company. Malibu gives way to Ventura, and the palm trees, which I comment on at every opportunity, will retain their un-nameable swaying romance throughout the trip. I scream with childish joy as we pass an eagle flying low to grab a snake with both sets of claws, the snake flexing desperately to wriggle out of reach. We stop at a mission, high up on a hill overlooking the hot, smug stucco of Santa Barbara. I have a naturally British suspicion of historic monuments in America, forever land of the relatively recent. I try and glean as much context as possible from the display outside of the ticket desk, which seems to be focused more on developing photographic techniques. There are several small photograph of groups of indigenous people who inhabited these coastal areas, known for basketry and beading—the Chumash. The tiny photos have been retouched to appear in color. Outside, sat waiting for my fellow travellers to pee, and notice I am sharing the wall with a tiny elderly woman holding a cup, whose riven, leathery face, and round dark eyes look unmistakably the same as the people in the pictures, who the tourist captions vaguely state were "instructed to work" on what had been their own farmland after the establishment of the mission. My head spins, realizing slowly how wounded by jetlag I am. I wonder about her and nearly try to strike up conversation as she shifts, her old back curved in the weak brown afternoon light. Then the toilets flush and the moment is gone. Epigenetics is the theory that people are born carrying the trauma of their ancestors.

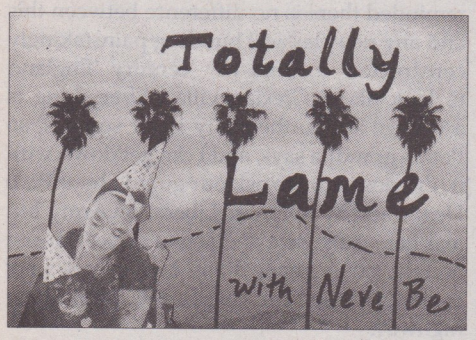
After a night in unsettlingly sterile San Luis Obispo, we're on the road again. Ben says just how much like Wales the landscape looks, a comment that makes me laugh because of its uncanny echo to a running family joke on trips of my youth, where Dad would take pains to compare any comment-worthy landscape we came upon on our travels unfavorably to the various beaches back home. "It's nice, but it's no Three Cliff Bay." San Luis Obispo's surrounding countryside was rolling hills and deeply pastoral in a way I had never connected with America, engorged and gorgeous, sheep and cows, green and lush. The hills fall around each other like cake mixture, folded in luxuriously on themselves, occasional lumps of fruit or nuts oozing out of its folds as soft boulders. We detour to find an In-N-Out Burger, a key "to do" on this trip (no strip malls in Wales, mind) and drive back across a ridge where these strange hills look like two obese giants spooning. Their greenness is startling, I punish my fellow travellers every time I see running water, "Isn't there a bloody drought on?!"

On we go, riding the Pacific Coast Highway. Route 1. There's an oddness in the hillside. It's The Hearst Castle, or La Cuesta Encantada. Built for William Randolph Hearst, newspaper magnate and all round rich man, by Julia Morgan, trailblazing woman architect and visionary. We're going to see inside this ridiculous set of mansions, "castles," sort-of-palaces on a mountain in San Simeon. Our company are primarily old white American tourists. I'm reminded of how big this country is as Grace recounts her father's lifelong obsession with this place and much anticipated eventual visit. Then again, I have still never been to Kremlin, far closer to London than San Simeon is to DC. How big this world is. It is a Wednesday morning, we pay $25, select a tour and board a shuttle bus which winds us up a mountain to this, the most bizarre monument to American Accumulation. While Britain has many hundreds of what are usually called "stately Homes," usually of some architectural import, open for tours, usually no longer inhabited, the difference is that I couldn't name one built in the 20th Century. While this should lend the place a modernity that fits with its material (primarily made of reinforced concrete) it only confuses things further because the concrete has been clad with different finishings to give the effect of, by various turns, Gothic church, the Alhambra palace in Seville, Spain and an assortment of Mediterranean villa vibes. It's jaw-droppingly opulent, all this replicant forgery (amongst which sit invaluably rare artefacts like Egyptian godheads from 5000 BC, just casually positioned in a fountain.) I'm stunned, but something somewhere in me (something rather British, I suspect) wants to find the whole thing in very bad taste, initially. I scold myself for wanting interpretation cards, logical positioning choices, at least an attempt to make this all seem logical, connected, "real." But this is not a museum, except maybe to the complicated connection between Hearst's interests and Morgan's skills, made flesh/concrete. Someone with endless money built a palace full of treasures, which took historical objects and architectural styles and smashed them together for simultaneous display, and it's an absolute trip. Curatorial nightmare, post-modern dream, even a monument to money cannot help but become something more. I'm reminded there is no difference between this and any neo-classical building painstakingly constructed in mid-18th century England to look like a Grecian villa. Everything is a mirage and authenticity is for squares, so Patti's grandpa says, and I can get down with it. I'm desperate to ask our guard about Patti Hearst and Symbionese Liberation Army, but fear her steely gaze and action calves. Hearst bought polar bears, lions and zebras here to make a zoo. The zebras still roam along highway.

Here's the outdoor Neptune pool, complete with a couple of real columns from ancient Rome (impossible to tell which) and our guide tells us that Lady Gaga was the last person to swim here before they stopped refilling it due to pressure from the State Parks authority. There's a bloody drought on, guys! She shuffles us along as we turn to face the view

of the endless Pacific. "He never came back," she quips. "He was sick, and back then people used to listen to their doctors. Those of us who work here are pretty sure he would have wanted to spend his last days here." I wonder what Hearst would have thought of her. The pseudo-democratization of his private plaything. $25 and a wander/wonder about. The dads on the tour ask repeatedly for figures of worth on various objects and building phases in "today's money" as though inflation can rationalize this spending, as though they might cash in their 401(k)s and do a Willy Hearst themselves. Our guide's mutters something defensively in response about the place being "almost beyond valuation."

We slink through the rooms of this crazy house and the mishmash, mash-up of the real and the imaginary hits harder as Italian horse racing flags waft playfully above a long thin medieval dining room lined with ornate wooden priest chairs. They'd mostly eat "down home" style cooking here and dance to country music, our guide tells us. Heinz mustard and ketchup bottles from the 1950s line the table. Next, we gaze into the blue of a mosaic pool where apparently staff can swim at an annual party. "Did you know you're walking on gold?" Beyond decadence, up here, high on the hill, the real and the unreal collide in an oasis of pure camp. A while later, back down on the shore, we meet a beach full of Elephant seals flullolloping about, fanning themselves with sludgy mud. Their bodies and the plumes of grey sand they send shooting upwards with outstretched fins disrupt the strange horizon where all this world stops, becomes blue. Cyan, azure, aqua, whatever you want to call it, depending on the light, just bluest, bluest blue. You can build your castles and dream your big dreams, maybe even blaze a trail, secure the lipstick kisses on your tomb, but nature will always win out when it comes to beauty. We head back to the hire car as Mother Pacific laughs warmly in our faces.



Revenge is returning to the place where it happened, and bringing someone along for the ride.

Content Warning: This piece is about personal and community responses to sexual assault and other forms of violence and intergenerational / intercommunity trauma.

I wore my BEAST shirt (all caps because it is in all caps) to the Transformative Justice study group today. As it turns out, it served a dual purpose, as a comforting object and as a name-tag. I didn't bring my large stuffed alligator, Chicken Soup, which Tony got me, who is perfect. But in two weeks, when we get into the nitty gritty of discussing responses to childhood sexual abuse, I will need all the Chicken Soup I can get. I didn't know it at the time, but it was also Di's birthday when I was wearing the shirt, so happy to know I was channeling love to her in some way.

I have been thinking a lot about revenge. In the context of histories of violence, and my experiences of violence. Not enacting it necessarily, but that underlying desire that so many of us have to...return? To the place where it happened to us? Or to our loved ones? Our community members. Our ancestors. Our people. The pain of intergenerational trauma, or the need for intergenerational accountability, is sparked with every instance of violence that we experience or witness. Look at all these words, they feel interrelated to me: Revenge. Retaliate. Restore. Repair. Reparations. As a Black person, jokes about reparations for the enslavement of my ancestors and my family and my experiences of racial violence, have long permeated my life. I say jokes, because that's most of what we've had to work with. The idea that things could be fair, equitable, or repaired, seems highly unlikely, so we, and other Black punks I know, make jokes. Like I'm gonna steal your shit cuz reparations. Or I'm gonna laugh at your expense cuz reparations. And it makes sense. I do want revenge. Not just for colonization and slavery and contemporary racism: the murder, humiliation, incarceration, and subjugation of people of color, but for ableism and the institutionalization, murder, and abuse of disabled people, for the murders of queer and transpeople, for the rapes of queer and nonbinary transpeople and transmen and all women. For my own rape, no not singular, I have been raped in my life at least ten times.

I appreciate that this writing is in print. Itwill take people longer to respond. Writing for the internet, which is my nearly full-time job now at *Harlot Magazine*, is fun and radical in some ways for how it reaches people, but it's also terrifying, and vaguely invasive, for how people are able to respond to my vulnerable and political musings so quickly, without digesting them, to tell me how I'm a stupid ugly wrong lame mulatto nigger whore. I have been a part of multiple different kinds of accountability processes. And I will be involved in many more. I have been educated by zines, by the work of Leah Lakshmi Piepzna Samarasinha, by my experience, by the experiences of my friends. There always seemed to be something in common between all of the accountability processes or community accountability attempts I have seen, and also something wrong with all of it. But I could never quite put my finger on what felt insufficient.

Doing the required readings for the Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective's training/study group, I found that they were largely an overview of different community accountability structures that have been used by radicals/punks across the United States in the past. What struck me the most, both doing the homework and attending the first day of the study group, was the stark differentiation between restorative justice, transformative justice, legal justice, and retaliatory justice. Of course, there are things that they all have in common. Restorative justice and transformative justice both were created by indigenous communities and communities of color. Transformative justice comes out of communities for whom calling the cops was never an option. The goal of restorative justice is to restore and repair things to how they were before the harm occurred, whereas transformative justice's goals are to transform the conditions which allowed the harm to take place, as well as to transform the people involved and their behaviors. Both legal justice and retaliatory justice are punitive, but one seeks to punish via the state and the other is vigilante in nature, "taking the law into our hands" as it were.

I am shocked by how often the accountability processes I've been involved in were retaliatory in some way, or if they weren't they felt like they insufficiently supported and held the survivor in their pain, anger, grief, fear, recovery, healing, and transformation. I would love to not choose to either further harm the survivor, or to harm the perpetrator. I once had a girlfriend, who was very abusive to me during our relationships and after it ended, who would always take the most retaliatory and violent stance possible whenever sexual assault occurred in our community. She did this for me when I was raped, and she did this when another friend of ours was. It felt reassuring, to hear her say that we should tie the dude up and torture him in a bathtub. I remembered that kind of rage from when I was little experiencing abuse, how close to murder I felt. Comics like *Hothead Paisan*, and various punk anthems about rape revenge, including the band Rape Revenge, felt like satansends and quenched my thirst, vindicating me for a while. When she was there, I didn't remember what the horrific, all consuming rage felt like, because she took it, she projected it out into the world for me. I don't know how she did that. To this day I don't know if she was a survivor. She never told me. She was a butch transgirl who

passed as a cisboy sometimes. She was smart and strong and savvy and beautiful and I adored her. And yet, that violence and rage was also so easily directed at me. Though she never hit me and she never tied anybody up or tortured them in a bathtub, she kept all her violence verbal and in theory, or self-directed, but the embers of her rage glowed no less. And I slowly realized that I didn't know what I felt, other than fear. Once she was gone from my life, all of my own feelings started to come back, and they terrified me too. Later, I learned she had tried to burn a friend's of ours' house down, so I guess the fire manifested after all.

It was hard, to feel both so supported by that rage and afraid of it. To be raped is one of the most incomprehensible pains, because you don't really know how to predict how much it is going to keep fucking your life up. How often you will keep returning to the place where it happened in your body, and yet how you will never really get there. The desire for reparations, for revenge, for retaliation, is a desire to return fully. To face your fears and prove to them and to yourself that you are bigger than them. That you have not been irreconcilably damaged. But you have been, haven't you? And shouldn't someone have to pay for that? Haven't you been using up your resources, running on empty, paying with loans? Shouldn't the person who harmed you have to replenish you? The problem is, how could you accept it from them? How could you actually accept a trade from the person who robbed you? Like in return for what they did to you, here is something nice? How could anything ever be nice? So they have to pay by being harmed to a degree comparable to how they harmed you. Nothing will ever be comparable to that, and it doesn't work to rape someone as a revenge for rape, if you're not a sociopath, which I'm guessing you're not, because you have feelings, because this hurts. So you have to get at the feelings of it. You have to make them feel humiliated, frightened, robbed, betrayed, traumatized, confused, and isolated, so that they will live with it for the rest of their life, like you will. I realize now that this is the logic behind so many of my and my friends' feelings over time. Even when we were attempting accountability processes modeled on the principles of Transformative Justice and Community. But what we forgot, or what we never learned, was that the goal was not to cause more harm. But to transform people and circumstances which harm, and who, most likely have either been harmed themselves, or do not understand the nature of harm. Just as I have not fully understood the nature of retaliation despite how I have desired it. It never stops. And it doesn't heal. I think that one reason why I am trying to learn more about how to practice transformative justice in my communities and want to pursue drama/movement/performance therapy is that I want to better tap into the radical and psychic process of time traveling, returning, but also altering, and transforming how we can process and respond to what happened. Altering time as well as turning back time, impacting our bodies in time, and affecting the future in myriad ways.

Practicing transformative justice is a welcome challenge. It causes me to check when my thinking or responses are violent. I believe there is a difference between actual violence and what just scares a person. I am never going to stray away from asserting myself and sticking up for other people in ways that might scare someone. Especially a white and or rich and or able bodied and or cisgender and or male someone. For it is not the case that one cannot make demands of any aggressor that might cause them to feel scared or humiliated, but I do think that fear and humiliation, while at times freezing and stagnating, can also be enlightening. Feelings that come up when you have been told that you have done something wrong are not unnatural, but how you respond to your own feelings, or how you try to put them on others, will affect your own ability to transform and heal.

I have been thinking so much about reparations. About revenge. For unlike Beyoncé I do not believe that the best revenge is your paper. In fact I don't think that she believes that. It's hard to get a clear picture on revenge. To predict its shape and leverage and heft and weight. For a long time I have wanted it, not just on one person, but hoards of them, and these are all different pictures. Or perhaps they are one. For a long time this looked like retaliatory justice, shared pain, but now I also see, that to share pain, is to facilitate a time travel, a return. To make someone see the same event that you saw unfolding. Whether or not they did or could at the time. Most people do not actually want to harm each other. But it doesn't change the fact that they do. So what are we going to do about that? I don't even have a bathtub. I have a desire for revenge still I think, but I don't have the will to cause pain. Unless it's consensual. So I want to do something even more radical, and even more difficult, because while I don't know my full capacity for transformation yet, I know that I already have, and I believe our capacities will expand if we let them, and so will our understanding of our abilities.

Inaccessibility shout-out: Gas station bathrooms and rideshare apps.

Accessibility shout-out: Queers for Black Liberation, for helping to create spaces where a lot of disabled people of color feel good about going, even if it's somewhere as relatively inaccessible on multiple levels as El Rio.

ENDNOTE:
If you feel like you know the ex whom I refer in this column, please do not let her know that this piece exists. It is really dangerous for her to be in contact with me, or for her to have me on her radar. I am taking a risk by writing any of this, but it feels salient.

Isn't enchantment what we like?

On the front cover of Gag's first full-length album we see a faceless biker engraving a mad-max circle into the dusty ground of a collapsed and carried apart building. Questions: who is this person, where is he, why is he doing what he does—all remain unanswered. But these clues are not haunting us since the nihilistic message of the painting seems to be very clear: Everything we see looks cool. Everything present here subordinated for this shallow but pretty entertaining coolness. The music itself on the record is no different. It's loud, fast when it has to be fast, slow when it should stomp; the vocals are sent through effects that make them sound crazy, the paces are precisely kept in beat and that's all. This is all, there is nothing to question, to find out, to think about. Not that long ago I heard that when encountering art we always wait for the next second, being excited about whether it will be interesting or boring. Occasionally both can be valid and important feelings. Here everything is predictable. The linear riffs are leading the listeners to mid-tempo crawling that make opportunities for the crowd to present different dance moves rather than push moshing. The scent of personality has been polished out by the seemingly perfect execution of what Gag wanted with this record. The record's title hints on an exercise to create America's greatest hits, even though American hardcore is only great when it is naive, funny, smart, brave, and weird. Trying to play out cynicism through hardcore in the age where sarcasm is blended into tap water does not recruit hardcore against the mainstream of the population. It sounds like Gag wants to make fun of hardcore but the consequence of this cynicism is turning their

music into a joke. Or it could be a homage to bands from whom Gag seemed to try to distance themselves when naming their records *This Punk Shit Is Cool But I Hope I Am Rob Zombie When I Am 28* or singing lyrics like *"Ha Ha Ha."*

Once promising and funny ideas such as putting together ultra-primitive but super catchy riffs and Flipper-ish monotony worked so great since it felt fresh and real, while this batch of songs sound as a paraphrase; some exhausted recycling of hardcore templates. Still many times it sounds great, because I love hardcore and I love punk and I find it cool that people write über simple riffs that I can shake my head to in basements, but records are for home listening and this music without the atmosphere of full blown punk reality is just a cheapshot. They fell into the tragic trap of punk and hardcore that is being unable to care about anything beyond what's happening inside of the subculture. This music used to be a reaction to the outside world, a bunker made in defense but now the world is happening inside this quickie shelter. Hardcore has spoiled itself with too much self-reflection and outside the safe walls of DIY spaces music like Gag's does not support me against anything, nor does it cut me off from the boring reality and push me into the fantasy world of torn shirts and shit-marked boots. In their final song they use a saxophone and that also only supports their music not their self-expression. Have they ever heard a jazz / experimental record or just read about it?

It's not the false desire of fair play that turns me against the majority of American hardcore but the boring majority of the bands. Which makes European bands that tend to copy the already boring US ones even worse but this is a rant I'm tripping on for too long now.

One of my friends pointed out a contradiction: how can I say that I've gotten bored of American bands when my favorite current band is Gun Outfit who are not just American but sound American as well? The reason is I'm not against countries but maybe over established sounds and also Gun Outfit is the best band in the world right now.

I had the chance to catch them play in Berlin on their European tour and it was a dream coming true. I could not resist smiling through the whole performance—not if I wanted to fight against this rare happiness. I was in full trance as I was swinging my body over my static legs, having some of the best times of my life. I cannot remember too much of their set but the feeling that I had all along the show is still with me. I always thought about them as a band that could evoke artificial memories, those kinds that even if they do not exist are still familiar. Now I have something to connect my bittersweet nostalgia to because I have found it, seen it and this enchantment has taken a form. Years ago I spent a whole spring in a cellar-cold flat happy surviving on doubts, on women, on grilled cheese sandwiches, a minimum wage job, garlic ransoms, touring bands, vegetable markets, literature festivals, too much drink, indoor cigarettes, and never-finished books. In all that hectic daze, travelling through the city while melting on city buses matched their records. The environment of happiness but aware of failure. Then I took my chances and now with a more stable life I still love them and they still talk to me even if I can feel that they are more brave, and human-like than I am. But still, in a way, I connect with them and I can't really express how much it means to me to know that we get each other.

Except maybe for one number they did not play any older songs. I didn't feel disappointed because even just to be in a room with people who have in themselves one of the best songs written in the last decade already has made me satisfied. I could see the greatness in them and it was a great experience looking at them, smiling on them, being happy around them. It was great to witness how all the time during their set Carrie and Dylan were focusing on each other, dancing their guitar parts as if the movement in their legs were more important than the music that they played with their hands. They were battling the flu so they asked the venue to stop the stupid fog machine, they looked high and lost but still they smiled. It was one of the shows I have enjoyed most in my life.

Before visiting their gig we went to a local gig at which I missed seeing Mülltüte, hung with the Piss crew, went to the KW museum and among other brilliant art we saw a great video made by Elizabeth Price (ex-Talulah Gosh). We ate a bunch of different dumplings at various Asian restaurants. Berlin is filled with culture and the city is pretty relaxed. Besides digging the Nasal Boys and the first Rudolph Dietrich records (HOT LOVE scene) I bought Condominium's Thug 7". I saw Condominium few years ago play here at Budapest and their set was more than convincing, ragingly crushing art-brut hardcore, one where the music was way weirder than it's players. They could hide beyond their music. Their Sub Pop relation wedged a distance between them and me but due to the great memories of their live performance I bought their last 7". It is an excellent record. The layout looks like a crazy modernist exhibition, and dares to be challenging without giving easy results or aiming for shock sensation. The music sounds machine-like, like a creation of some futuristic science, where even the parts that are hard to understand even sound relevant. They put hardcore on a new platform in which physics is dictated by them. Condominium's music says fuck all authority.

P.S.: I need to hear the recent XM2 demo!

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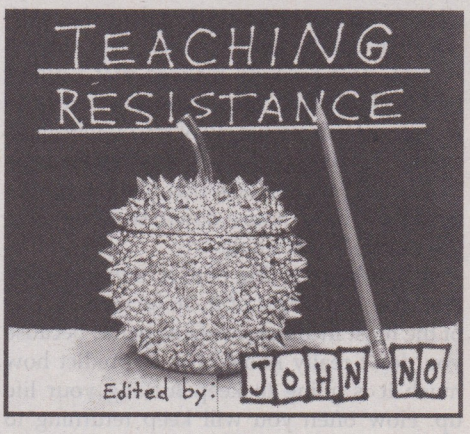

This month's Teaching Resistance *is from Taylor McKenzie, who is a punk in his first year of teaching German at a secondary (middle and high) school in Oklahoma City. In this reflection on his teaching, Taylor honestly addresses some major issues and big questions about teacher training and practice in the US, including the very important fact that exactly* where *one teaches will strongly impact exactly what and how that teaching is going to go down. Taylor can be contacted directly at iresignhc@gmail.com.*

Hi everyone, I just started teaching middle school and high school German at a combined middle/high school in Oklahoma City. I'd like to say that, before I started six weeks ago, I had no official training. No teaching degree or certification. No actual plans to teach. To explain, I was working at my uncle's screen-printing shop. One day I made a t-shirt delivery to my former secondary school, and I decided to say hello to the German teacher that I had all throughout middle school and high school. She said, "Hey! Oh man, can you come outside for a minute?" Then we walked outside where she told me that the school desperately needed a full-time German teacher. I was shocked and overwhelmed and told her that I definitely would have to sleep on it before I made my decision. Regardless, she took me downstairs to meet the principal and got things rolling. The next day, I got in touch and told her I would take the job. Then after winter break, I became a substitute teacher for the classes that I'm currently teaching, and then I began the "emergency certification" process (a process in which the district starts and then streamlines the teaching certification process *while* you are teaching under a temporary contract).

You may be asking yourself, "Why would they desperately need someone like me,

who has no prior experience or training or anything of the sort, to fill this position?" I have studied the language for over ten years and lived and worked in Berlin for two years, but that doesn't mean I know how to *teach* it to kids ranging from the 7th to the 11th grade. In short, you could say that Oklahoma has been waging a war against education for some time now. Just within the past week, the state legislature voted to *ban* the AP US History exam because it does not teach "American exceptionalism." (This is a direct attack on indigenous identities, a push to further silence any discussion about the atrocities that the US has perpetuated—and so blatantly!) Teachers are also sick of meager pay in comparison to bordering states where teachers automatically get $10k-plus more a year, so many have just left Oklahoma to live and work in Texas. To sum things up, Oklahoma is in a state of emergency when it comes to public education.

So here I am, winging it like a baby bird, taking first flight. Even though I'm a new teacher and sometimes I feel like I'm just treading water, in the middle of the ocean, with no land in sight, it's a wonderful job, in that you get to be around raw, still-not-so-beaten-down-and-molded-by-society bundles of energy all day. It's exhausting, but learning all of today's new dance moves and slang from teenagers sure as hell beats listening to adults groan about their miseries. And, most of the time, they're honest, and if they do try to lie to you, they're usually pretty bad at it.

But even though the students are mentally fresher than many of the adults in their lives, that does not mean that they are immune to opinions, biases, and rhetoric, regardless of whether these are humane or inhumane, open-minded or narrow-minded, considerate or anti-social, worldly or nationalistic, critical or blind. Then when I think of teaching resistance, I ask, "How do you accomplish this objectively, without just teaching them your own opinion and cleverly convincing them your way of thinking is right?" In these past couple of weeks, when larger, difficult questions come up in class, I try to respond with questions that guide them to even more questions. I hope to, even if ever so slightly, instill a habit of constantly questioning everything, of not being afraid to ask authority figures as well as yourself questions that might shake any foundations you previously thought to be unshakeable or off-limits. One of the hardest things about this is coming up with the extemporaneous, simple questions as answers to their difficult questions. I know there are some resistance teachers out there reading this who have experiences with this type of Socratic nudging, urging young people to keep questioning their peers, parents, family, and every other adult with an opinion out there. If so, how do you make this process effective? Do you have an arsenal of responses that you have at hand to use when these types of situations present themselves? I've found myself thinking about tangential conversations that I've had with the students these past couple of weeks and then thinking of better, more open, and accessible ways to frame an idea or a simple question that would have gotten their mental gears cranking only after the fact.

A conversation that has stuck with me throughout all of the everyday chaos so far (teachers, you know what I'm talking about) is a brief back-and-forth about US-erected Japanese internment camps that I had with a student. We were reading a novel about the rise of the Nazis in Germany and the simultaneous, steady decline of Jewish civil rights leading up to the Holocaust. The student made some comment about concentration camps. I felt compelled to derail the class discussion a bit to focus a bit on the US' own political history in order to make some comparisons. Students in the US are often taught about the big, bad Nazis, but this can allow for the other Western powers of the 20th century to catch a break when it comes to criticism of their warring strategies, crimes, or policies. I asked them if the United States had ever done something similar, for instance, the Japanese internment camps. I pointed out that the internment camps and the concentration camps existed at the same time and used similar methods of exclusion and isolation. The student did not want to recognize any comparison between the two countries' actions. It was as if the fact that an entire people's civil liberties were directly targeted and violated with the uprooting of families and forced internment was pushed aside in their mind, or at least less critically analyzed, just because there was not a calculated genocide taking place within the Japanese concentration camps erected by FDR.

Is this a product of US American historical whitewashing? Of living in a state where the legislature, *in 2016* for chrissakes, votes to ban the AP US History exam because it exposes the lies, genocide, and bigotry of the history of the US government? Absolutely. So maybe that student still thinks I'm wrong, or maybe they think I'm just a lefty who's seeing things too one-way. All in all, none of that matters if they managed to ask themselves at least one question regarding their opinion of the topic. Teaching resistance is teaching how to question. But it's important to remember that questioning your own beliefs and opinions is just as crucial to questioning others'. As teachers, we have to remain open to new cultural developments, trends, and ways of thinking and perceiving the world, and we should hold the students in our classrooms to the same critical expectations. But we also have to help guide them to their own personal avenues of self-questioning and questioning their environmental factors. Pushing them to question themselves is one of the first steps, if not *the* first step, to learning how to resist injustice.

Teachers! Please, if you have any wisdom to share, any good, simple questions to get students thinking and questioning on their own, please email me at iresignhc@gmail.com. I would love to meet any teachers out there who might be reading this.

The Teaching Resistance column is designed to provide a platform for radical, punk-affiliated, subversive teachers/educators to share their ideas and draw attention to important issues around education; particularly compulsory- and community-based education. If you are a teacher (anywhere in the world) for students of primary or secondary school ages (K-12), Community Colleges, or alternative learning arrangements such as collectivist free schools, and you want to submit an idea for a column, please write an email to teachingresistance@gmail.com. There is also an archive for this column which can be found online at teachingresistancearchive.blogspot.com.

Quick! Off the top of your head: What is punk?

Ah-ha! I doubt you're thinking of the same thing I am. Perhaps you're a fucking loser that listens to garbage—doubt you'd make the same assessment of me. Maybe you're some Lemmy-lite idiot who wears studs and decorates his room in old Nazi knives and dreams of getting his girlfriend breast implants. You could be a dreadlocked squatter not good for much besides selling weed on Haight Street and watching GG Allin videos on Youtube at the public library. Maybe, and this is most likely, your band is either reviewed or interviewed in this magazine so you've purchased it for the first time. The details aren't really all that important. The fact of the matter is, we are very different people with no doubt very different mindsets, with moral compasses set to follow a different North.

Defining punk is not particularly difficult to do. It is a subgenre of rock music that began in either England or New York in the late 1970s characterized by varying degrees

of guitar distortion and generally apocalyptic lyrics. This is indisputable, unless you're a wrongheaded quibbler who insists it began with the Standells or, even more bizarrely, Link Wray*. Beyond that, though, what is it? I mean, what differentiates it from other types of music? Its rebellions attitude? Give me a fucking break. That's been the hallmark of all youth-oriented music trends since youth-oriented music trends were first thought up (likely by some Jew like me). Its clothing? Well, yeah, but considering most punks look like white power dope fiends a year out of prison, on parole after doing a ten-year bid for selling meth and currently tooling around El Paso in shorts so that the whole world can see their bad tattoos...that's not saying much.

You know it and I know it: Punk is just a kind of music, like rap or folk or anything else. In most respects, it's nothing special. So essentially, we're just people who like maybe not even the same bands, but essentially (at least to the outside observer) the same music—very good, but that doesn't make us friends. In fact, due to me being insane, it might make us actual *enemies*. It used to be I'd get excited when I saw a stranger in a punk shirt; I'd give that nod of recognition and feel great when he or she gave it back. Now, though, I shirk from them like I shirk from everything! I'm terrified of some goombah in a Power Trip shirt fucking cornering me near the Burger King on 16th...what would we talk about? We both like *fucking guitars*? Jesus. I'm sick just thinking about it!

But is nihilism, moreso than the vague leftism or sometimes ultra-specific Anarchism, the most central facet of punk? I'd say it is. Most punks I know are just shithead losers who like beer and KBD comps.

Punk music extends from the far reaches of the crust gutter to the high peaks of whatever bands I've played in...and buddy, believe me when I say that covers a lot of fucking ground. And, believe it or not, I don't wanna see almost any of it! I've got no interest in hanging around with cretinous fools who, with their broken brains can't see past the next goalpost—a marker they'll never reach anyhow. What is the *point* of all this?

The point so far, has been *to have a good time!*

There's been no other reason for punk to exist. Any battles to be won or lost have long been resolved; you've got us here at *Maximum Rocknroll* who essentially run a magazine for the rock'n'roll equivalent of Civil War reenactors...you've got various strains of hardcore fluctuating in and out of vogue...and that's it. And that's been fine! But perhaps it is time to take things a step further.

Our next stop must be of course murder.

Of course, we'll eventually have bigger enemies: bloggers, liberals, anyone with any more money than us...Cultural kulaks and neoliberal running dogs. They'll trick us, they'll cheat us, they'll eat us alive. Gnash up our bones and snort them off gleaming mirrors on coffee tables in the living rooms of expensive high-rises. So far, we've waste dour time on foolishness! We became ugly—because, what? We hate our parents? Of course we hate our parents! It's our *revolutionary duty* to hate our parents! But such simple and narrow thinking must be shed when one reaches the latter stages of puberty; accept that if you enjoy punk music and the punk lifestyle, you were born completely broken without the faintest hope of being fixed. Understand that, and go (always) one step further!

Our true objective, of course, is revolutionary violence. Even if you are such a blockheaded cretin that your only outlet for the bickering demons in your soul is through the avenues of mindless destruction readily available—you should make an effort into channeling this rage into every orifice of the enemy. Sharpen your witless hate into a spear and thrust it into the leering eye of the bourgeoisie! But first, hone it upon the hides of our more aimless former comrades. The beer-bellied cocaine-sniffers who fart around in bars...they must go first.

A quote from my dad: "Our task is that of ruthless criticism, and much more against ostensible friends than against open enemies" My father, Karl Marx, said that!

Many folks seem to place a premium on liking the same exact music and believing in the same things as when they were younger. I'm not going to trot out the old adage about the younger man being a radical, the older being a conservative; I actually believe the opposite. When I was younger, I was dumb and thought nothing could change and maybe a life of partying and Loud Rock Music was all I needed. Not the case! More than any of that, I found I needed to be insane, and so insane I've become!

Frightening! That was why people were so confused and scared by the initial ascent of punk. This was something that wasn't attached to any political program, so redbaiting didn't work. Aside from the top groups, this current of rock music mostly stayed out of the music industry, so blacklisting wasn't really an option. It was its own organic thing, and it cast a huge shadow which we're still living in the blackness of. We must drown that shadow in blood!

The early era of punk culminated in that ultimate triumph of nihilism, the murder of Nancy Spungen by the illiterate psychopath Sid Vicious. Is it not our duty as rockers to carry on the banner of that fallen Hero of the Revolution? Is the only way to truly "make punk a threat again"

Yes! Of course! One thousand times yes!

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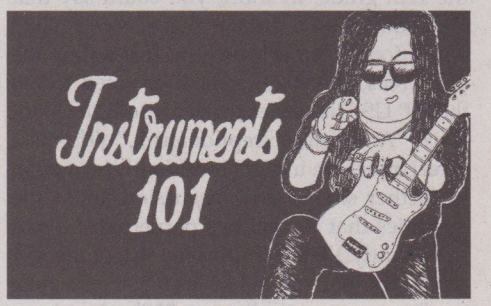
*This is a dangerous trap to fall into; by these metrics, anyone who has ever played guitar poorly and was ugly in the face stands as a Punk Musician. Fuck.



Bargain Guitars

Month after month you're painfully reading this column, and you are very frustrated because you think you can't have a good, yet affordable instrument for the few bucks you earn—or don't—every month. I want to prove the opposite. So here's a list of what I consider to be great instruments that are worth every single dime. For this column I tried to keep the price tag as low as around $500.

Squier Jazzmaster J. Mascis Signature: You've probably seen this one a lot lately, right? Sure, you have, because this is the best thing you'll probably get for the few bucks you have. The whole design of the Jazzmaster is a true classic thing and a workhorse, but you're afraid of the thing being from Squier. Fear not my friend, this is solid, and everything in there is good quality. The wood used is great, the neck feels good, the overall quality is pretty stunning, and even the pick-ups are doing a really great job. There are so many pros about this guitar I can't really make a full list, but I can still point a few cons here and there. First, if you're really picky about getting a real Jazzmaster, well, this one is loaded with P90, and not the real Jazzmaster pick-ups. It's not really a problem, but the P90 in there doesn't have the chime that the real Jazzmaster usually have, but considering it's just a really simple upgrade, you can easily overcome that thing and load your guitar with some other pick-ups. The other thing I don't like is that the pots and knobs are cheap, and the electronics are too. A full rewire of the entire thing could serve a better purpose. Last thing is that the tune-o-matic/adjusto-matic bridge (call it whatever you want, it's just a matter of patent) is also cheap and would be better if upgraded with a roller bridge. I didn't find the vibrato arm that good too. Beside all of that, it's a great and stunning instrument for such a price tag. If you're looking for an affordable guitar loaded with single coils, the search ends here. Thumbs up on this one, Mister Mascis.

Epiphone Casino: If you're looking for a hollow body guitar, search no longer. It's very affordable and the perfect jack-of-all-trades. This one can do pretty much anything with these two P90 pick-ups, except high gain metal sounds (P90 pick-ups hate doing such a thing). It's very light, and plays like a dream. You don't really need any upgrades and the sound is wonderful. (And rewiring a hollow-body guitar is the worst pain in the world, trust me on that!) Epiphone is also well known for all of the Gibson copies they are doing now, but I've never been much inclined to recommend those to anyone. On the other hand, their original designs of hollow-body models are really great for such a price. If you're more of a humbucker type of person, well, the Epiphone Sheraton II is pretty sweet too and around the same price range.

Tokai Love Rock: I know, I know, you people want a Les Paul shaped guitar to rock out like a boss. Please, do me a favor, and try to avoid these Epiphone copies—I think they are really cheap for their price range. On the other hand, Tokai does a great array of LP shaped guitars, namely the Love Rock, which I find truly great for such a small price tag. Not much needs to be said about a Les Paul shaped guitar that hasn't already been said already. The pick-ups are definitely OK, but you can still upgrade if you'd like to. The whole thing is great, so try one. It's your best bet for a quality Les Paul copy with only a three-digit price tag.

Fender Stratocaster and Telecaster Highway Series (Used): Looking for an affordable, yet quality excellent instrument? Look no more. The Highway series was designed to come out with American made instruments with a great quality of production for a very affordable price range. If you've been dreaming of a Stratocaster or a Telecaster, the Highway series will deliver the goods for half the price of the real deal with a better finish than the Mexican or Asian made instruments. Sadly the Highway Series has been discontinued, but I'm sure you can find plenty of these floating around. There are no cons to these instruments, and I've seen a lot of pro musicians using them because they are workhorses and very reliable.

Peavey T-60 (Used): It has become one of the most prominent guitars in the punk scene during this last few years, and it is still one of the best secrets left in this world, so go out fast and find yourself one. This is probably the best $500 you can spend, before the entire world wakes up and has these price tags flying up to the ceiling. Yes, this one is worth all the praise it gets. It is a very high quality instrument, a really nice one to play, and from the wood, to the electronics, to the pick-ups, everything there is just great for such a decent price. This thing can do just about anything, but it is best used for clean or lightly overdriven sounds. It still does a great job with a fuzz pedal too. Go get one, or you'll regret it later. The only con is that you won't be the only one to play one of these at the punk gig, so be warned.

Jackson Adrian Smith SDX: For those about to bring their guitar to the slaughter, here is one of your safest bets. Well first, it's a signature from that guy in Iron Maiden, and who the hell doesn't like Iron Maiden, may I ask? Yeah, but still, this one is really affordable and just great. It does the shred thing very well. You have a Floyd Rose vibrato and three great pick-ups, that you can upgrade later, and a two piece body made out of some great wood, with a great finish. What more do you want for $500? I don't know. If you're looking for a con, a pick-up upgrade and electronic upgrade can serve this guitar in a great way. Slam some EMG active pick-ups in there, and boom, you're ready to run to the hills.

EVH stripped series: Ranging from the same zone than the Jackson Adrian Smith, with only one pick-up you've got yourself a pretty decent deal there, because that thing is definitely not a toy but a really good instrument. Only a few cons come to my mind, like the way it looks. Yes, you'll look stupid because it has the same stupid paint job as the Van Halen guitar. (Unless you're a huge EVH fan—let's bring Eddie back into the punk game in 2016, I dare you!) It's slightly above the $500 price range, and if you're a beginner, the Floyd Rose is a pain to deal with if you don't know what it is all about. If all of these cons don't bother you at all, you're in for a real atomic punk guitar.

Jackson JS32T Rhoads (Used): Ready for looking like a dumbass shredder? This thing sounds as good as it looks stupid. Yeah, if you can stand the shape, this is a riff machine for such an affordable price it's insane. It's not the best of the woods or the best finish, but it does a really great job with two high output pick-ups that are definitely designed to assault heavy riffs on a high gain amplifier. This thing is clearly leaning toward the metal grounds, but if you're about to play some chugga chugga hardcore metal, this is a really great option. Con #1 is the same as above. Slam some real active pick-ups in this and you got a demolition derby. Also, I don't think this one is still in production, but I guess you can still find some floating around, used or not.

Fender Precision Bass (Used): I must confess I have a really sweet spot for Precision basses, especially to play punk. Well it's not a mystery to anyone that this is probably the most used bass design of all times. Fender just simply got it right from the start with this one. I think the Jazz Bass is great, but the straightforward side of the P-Bass is just perfect for punk. And the cool side of it is that there are probably so many of these floating around on craigslist or whatever that you don't really need to look too far for a great instrument at a decent price. There is simply no better option at this point if you want to look for a bass. A pick-up upgrade is probably the only con you'd find to a Precision Bass. Try to avoid the low budget Squier, especially the Affinity series (but the vintage modified series is decent), and get a used Fender instead. It is really worth it on many levels.

All in all, keep in mind that it is always better to go to a store and try the instrument before buying it. Now that you've got a pretty good place to start, I still don't know what keeps you from starting your own band? If something is still bugging your mind, hit me up. I'll answer anything.

instrumentsoneohone@gmail.com

ENDNOTES:

1) So, Neighborhood Brats are back at it? That's great news to me. Great band.

2) Your favorite ex-coord Lydia is my favorite human right now. Ask her to draw you a dinosaur holding a bucket full of "sausages." You won't be disappointed. That lady got skills for sure.

3) Any good punk drummers out there? Hit me up. I want to write a thing or two about drums in here, but I need your help first.

OBITUARY

FILIP FUCHS

I woke up yesterday morning to a message that Filip Fuchs passed away, succumbing to liver cancer at forty years old, leaving behind his partner (recently turned wife) of twenty-plus years and their three young daughters.

I suppose that shouldn't be shocking; Filip was wrought with health problems over the course of his life. And I had already cried in 2012, when Lotus Fucker went to Europe and Filip collapsed and was hospitalized just two days before our leg of the tour with See You in Hell, forcing them to cancel. I got the message in Lyon and was just so worried and stressed out that I broke down in tears on the spot. But thankfully we got to visit Filip in the hospital in Brno a few days later. He seemed to be in high spirits and was so happy to see all of us, and of course he was

bemused to see that I too required a hospital visit with yet another torn ACL. This time around I'm crying again but there is no relief. I won't get to see my friend again.

I met Filip through Zach Howard. Zach was already in touch with him, trading records and videos and zines, and had released a collection CD of the early See You in Hell records. I was already a fan and always had so much respect for See You in Hell as a hardworking band that did everything "the punk way," as I saw it. When I started writing Filip as well, I had the idea to invite See You in Hell to the USA, to tour with Lotus Fucker and xBrainiax. We pulled it off in 2011, and over the last few years we would share plenty of other experiences together and became close.

I loved Filip. I would consider him one of my best friends. We wrote novels back and forth over e-mail, and whenever we were together, we could talk for hours about punk, about politics, about life. He was a constant source of wisdom, inspiration, guidance, and comedy for me. I valued his opinion more than almost anyone else's in my life, and I sought his opinion on just about everything. People like him, with a clear-cut vision and uncompromising dedication to their passions and beliefs, are fucking rare in the human race. It made him an irreplaceable figure in the modern punk scene. He will be missed and never forgotten.

Filip loved punk, deeply and passionately, dedicating a lot of his life to it, in bands, in zines, in gig organizing. But more than that, he believed in punk. He believed that punk is important, that DIY is important, that punk ethics and politics are important. This was one part of him that inspires me the most, and this was a big part of how we always saw eye-to-eye on just about everything.

Filip was also brutally honest, which some people found aggravating but I found immensely humorous. He loved to complain and he was never afraid to challenge those around him for not living up to a pure notion of DIY ideals or not living up to their own potentials. I always found this refreshing, but I couldn't help but have a laugh sometimes too. One of my favorite memories of Filip was when he made a big speech at the See You in Hell/Lotus Fucker gig in San Jose CA about how American punks don't know how to be hospitable (truth), American punks are rude (truth), American punk scene basically sucks (not true), etc. I mean he was pretty eloquent yet straightforward, I'm not doing his points justice here, but you get the idea.

But of course San Jose was also a gig where we get the deluxe treatment from our angelic gig organizer Stephanie, with a great dinner, great breakfast, comfortable place to stay, lovely company, etc., a real proper treatment. And we laughed our asses off after the show as we chowed down and gave Filip a proper roasting and amidst all the laughing we jokingly made him apologize to Stephanie and sing the praises of American punk, which was a pretty hilarious moment in and of itself.

Of course all the beliefs in the world don't mean much without action, and Filip had no shortage of that. Filip talked the talk but also walked the walk, a combination that made him highly influential in his regional community and also made a huge impression and influence on me.

Being from the Czech Republic afforded Filip's bands no inherent international acclaim or "hype", Filip definitely felt this and it played a big role in shaping his outlook on punk. There was no spotlight, no hookups, no given loyalty or reputation the way countries like Japan or USA receive. But See You in Hell toured the entire planet Earth, had domestic pressings of their releases in numerous countries, and became a well-known band on the international level, basically putting Czech hardcore on the map for a lot of people. This was always accomplished in a completely DIY style, as punk as possible, without any compromises, entirely through hard work and dedication to punk.

Filip, and the rest of See You in Hell, were always making connections, building relationships. With an encyclopedic knowledge of punk and never-ceasing curiosity and drive, Filip and his bandmates constantly sought to both bring Czech punk to the rest of the world, and bring the rest of the world to Czech punk.

Filip worked tirelessly to promote Czech punk to the rest of the world. He released records highlighting their regional scene, and traded them all around the world. He wrote long scene reports for *MRR* (an institution that he cherished and valued immensely), culminating in writing a short book about Czech hardcore history. He had an endless number of penpals that he wrote and traded with, spreading stories and information about Czech and Slovakian punk scenes.

But in equal amounts, Filip promoted the world of punk to local Czechs. Behind the scenes, he sorted releases for cool foreign bands on Czech labels. He brought cool foreign bands to the Czech Republic, from Vivisick and Systematic Death to Lotus Fucker and Ruidosa Inmundicia. He organized tons of gigs. He had a zine the size and scope of which rivals *MRR*, entirely in Czech, with a focus on international bands and foreign tours by Czech bands, always with tons of pictures, scene reports, descriptions, documentation. And of course, the zine was bursting with record reviews.

Filip was a key personality in Czech and Slovakian punk music, but also in the international punk community, by being a centralized bridge between his "small redneck country" as we'd joke, and the rest of the world at large.

But I know Filip would not want to focus entirely on punk, because he believed strongly that punk is more than just music, it's a politic, it's a way of life. And Filip walked this walk too. He worked as a lawyer fighting in solidarity to help the disenfranchised Romani in his locale. Of course a big chunk of his zine was dedicated to political discourse and news stories. He was active with protests and outspoken in his beliefs.

My personal favorite story of Filip, and perhaps how I'll always remember him, is when he got his nickname "Two Fingers Chelsea". When See You in Hell started playing Japanese hardcore-style punk, it required a good amount of guitar solos, but Filip was never good enough to play the solos correctly night after night. So us Lotus Fuckers would always joke with him, "Oh you play like Chelsea…if Chelsea only had two fingers!", which always made everybody laugh. And Filip would just kinda chuckle in that nervous childish chuckle he did and make some remark that punk isn't about being great at your instrument, that's only for metal (truth).

Underlying this, something I really admired about Filip, was that even when he wasn't good enough at playing guitar to really nail every solo perfectly, he went for it anyway. He never let something like "skill" hold him back. He had a vision, he knew quality, he loved punk, and nothing was going to stop him from that expression. And in the same way, he never let being from an uncool country, or his health, or communism stop him. (He was old enough to have tons of fascinating stories of discovering punk when Czechoslovakia was a Soviet country, and how the punk scene [and society] had changed throughout the radical social upheavals of the fall of communism and the birth of the Czech Republic. And I loved hearing them.) He never let anything stop him from being punk, knowing as much as he could about punk, and making punk happen. He had a drive that was almost without peer, fueled entirely by his love for punk.

I will always remember Filip as one of the most intensely dedicated and passionate individuals I knew, and our conversations, our shared experiences, his beliefs and values, will continue to shape mine and inspire me. For years I ask myself "what would Filip think about this?" as I try to gauge my own actions or opinions, and I

know I'll continue to wonder that.
I'll never forget my hardcore brother Filip. He will be missed and loved for as long as I'm still alive.

Kamikaze Dan / SPHC

OBITUARY

ANDREW LOOMIS
1962–2016

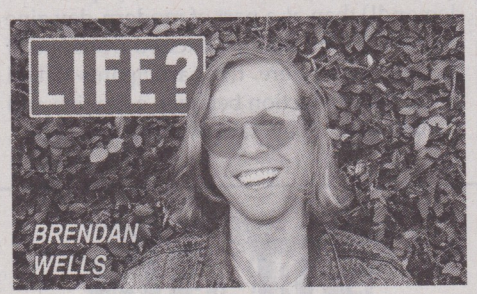
On March 8th during the Total Eclipse in Pisces New Moon Super Moon Dead Moon drummer Andrew Loomis passed away. Upon hearing the news there was not one drop of whiskey left in Vera, every radio station in Portland immediately played Dead Moon records until the wake at Dantes, and every crossroad in Ljubljana had white candles burning to nubs in empty bottles of Jack Daniels.

I saw Dead Moon more than I've seen any band. The records are great, but the live shows were what created us fanatics. The public rituals you know (the three-way handshake, the candle, beer on the floor tom, etc). How they did it, how they made such a cathartic space every fucking time I saw them, that's a mystery. *No one* knows how it happened, but no one denies that it did. That's a powerful band, with a strong backbone. That was Andrew.

I only knew Andrew as a part of Dead Moon, and as a friend of friends. Outside of shows, he recognized me about half the time—someone he knew that he couldn't place, but it didn't matter. He was friendly, even when wasted and impish and looking to fuck with people. He was the one who was outside the shows hanging out, looking to score drugs or see what was up or whatever. Lurking around, he met many readers of this magazine and got them into shows for free, especially if they were sold out. On stage, he was up front for a reason: he was the best drummer ever. Powerful, simple, solid, and true. And also playful and fucking around, making faces, beer all over everything, flipping people off, and when needed, relighting the candle. It was an important balance. It's so easy to take it all seriously, especially when you're in the best band in the world. What an ego any of them could have been saddled with, and what a joy to discover they weren't. It's also so easy to fuck up a simple structure, especially with dynamic songwriters like Fred and Toody. And it's easy to take Andrew for granted. We were trying to fix that with an interview project last summer, but it was last spring that the lymphoma showed up, and even when he was cancer free all the other health problems were still a problem. Andrew was excited for the interview, but it didn't happen.

Lessons learned: Don't fucking wait around for shit to happen! Running out of time is real. Embrace who you are and follow it to the end! Can you imagine Andrew being halfway about anything? Friends, people, be good to your friends! Be there for them! The dedication of the old school Portland Rockers to Andrew was a thing of beauty. To Fred, Toody, and the folks in Boy Wonders, Snowbud & the Flower People, and the Shiny Things, thank you for being in these bands that have meant a lot to many of us. Thank you Andrew—the backbone holding our weight, keeping the beat, and having a fucking great time doing it. You will be deeply missed.

Erin Yanke



In a lot of ways, when it comes to punk, zines have been as important to me as music. The first time I went to Quimby's Bookstore was probably even more exciting than the first time I went to Extreme Noise Records: so many unique and awesome things to discover and knowing this might be the only way to get them unless it was from the creator in person. Making the trek to Chicago Zine Fest was a big part of everything for me as well: discovering new art and ideas and putting myself out there to meet and get support from like-minded people. It was just as encouraging as going on my first tour. Tabling last year meant taking an all-night Megabus from Minneapolis, walking straight from the bus stop to the fest with a rolling suitcase full of zines, tabling all day, and then rolling out of Chicago the next morning, all in just about 24 hours. Somehow, with enough coffee, I can actually thrive after sleeping on a bus while sitting at a folding table and talking to strangers while they scrutinize what I've put all my time into. (Except for the time I tabled next to Keith McGrath, from the *Crucial Changes* photo zine, who would call out "punk zine!" to anybody that walked by who looked like they were punk. How do you compete with that? Keith sold a lot of zines that year while I tried to absorb some of the runoff from his salesmanship.)

It was my first time at Chicago Zine Fest that I picked up what's now my favorite zine of all time, issue number 19 of *The Fury* by Mark Novotny. Only two dollars, lots of content, construction paper cover (ooh la la!), and that kind of early 2000s record insert aesthetic with Letraset haphazardly stuck all over the place, everything typed out with a typewriter, and lots of words X'd out and corrected: a DIY labor of love. Mark came up in the '90s Chicago Fireside Bowl scene, moved around to a couple different places, and found himself back in Chicago where he wrote this issue of his zine about the punk scene (and the punk experience at large) with that kind of detached perspective on yourself and your community you get when you've moved away. He does it in such a thoughtful and intelligent way that I fell in love with the zine right away and ordered multiple copies of every issue to give to friends. He even indulged me with a few letters back and forth, but I don't know where he is now or what he's doing.

I bought the zine when I was still living in Iowa City and since then have moved a couple times like Mark did. Returning to the zine now, I can understand things a little more about the perspective and disconnect that come with leaving. "...falling out of the rhythm of people's lives, hesitating to embrace, slow to laugh, one step behind on some in joke, being in a room full of old friends and feeling that you're the odd man out, knowing any distance caused is by your own hand." It's a little dramatic, for sure, and my outlook isn't quite as bleak as this, but in a way it's accurate for how I've felt the (too few) times I've been back to visit as small and close knit a place as Iowa City or had friends come in from out of town to play shows; a sheepish greeting to an old roommate, the struggle to decide how honestly you answer "How are you?" with the guilt that you were the one who moved out after asking other people "Why are you moving?" in an unintentionally incredulous way.

The biggest thing for me that came out of that issue of *The Fury* is a small critique on punk culture that inspired me to start my own zine, *Why Am I Here?* "...I think punk has a legitimacy. The majority of its focus lies in music. But where is the outlet for other 'Art'? Plays, writing, forums?" Reading this was the impetus for a lot of decisions I've made since then. I love punk music, but there is so much more to this culture and existence that keeps me here in this community beyond fast music. It's like in the interview for Chelsey's skate zine, *Not Shit*, in this issue. Everyone talks about how much they love to skateboard and how they want to take it back for themselves from a wider skate culture

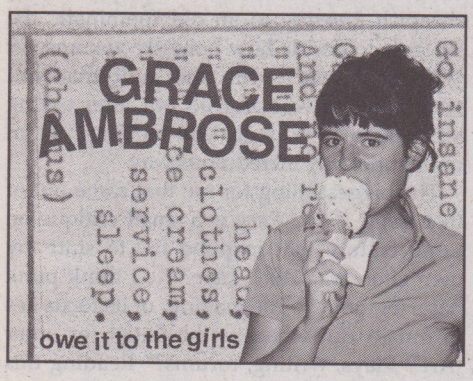
they don't agree with, a culture that has such a consumer and boys club mentality. We can have a great community to back us up, so why not get everything we can out of our time here? Why not pull the things we love and the things we want to do into our punk communities? Why should punk community have to only mean going to shows to watch bands? I've never felt as understood as I have among the people I've met through punk, and that's why I'm most excited to talk about how much I love plants when I'm hanging out at a punk show, no matter how un-punk that might seem. Book yourself on a punk gig and give a slideshow of your photos, show a movie you made, or read something from a zine you wrote. Bring a bunch of markers to the house show and get your friends to draw comics with you. Interview your favorite zinester, artist, or activist, and send it to *MRR*. "The Zines Issue" is a great way to highlight something we care about that isn't another band, but it doesn't have to be relegated to a special issue, and there's no reason we can't see something like this included every month. Do something weird and do it with your friends.

ENDNOTES:

1) He hasn't published since 2012, but you can still buy past issues of *The Fury* at thefuryzine.bigcartel.com.

2) I already quit my dishwashing job (not punk of me) to work at Amoeba (not super punk either).

3) Do you have houseplants you'd like to donate to *MRR*? They would look so nice at our record review stations. Or if you'd just like to let me know if you have anything to say about loving plants in the context of DIY punk, send your good vibes to brendan@maximumrocknroll.com.



I've been working on this issue in bits and pieces for the past few months, and I have to say, I'm pretty pleased with it! I hope you'll pull the mini *MRR*-as-*Nuts!* out of the center and be as maddened by its layout as I always am by Ben's. If you've ever bought any records by OTAN or Destino Final or Las Otras or, yes, Barcelona, you must read the excellent *Mierda* interview—I return to punk over other forms of music because of its relationship to context, and this conversation is the best and most insightful evaluation of the economic, social, and political context surrounding punk in Barcelona that I've ever read. *Not Shit* is the zine that made me stop staring at my skateboard and actually ride it—unadulterated joy and pure expression on the page. The day after we interviewed Chelsey, Ash and I went to Oakland in the early morning and skated around the marina with her and Cheri, the best half of Pig DNA. Liberation and total destruction, so windy that our jean jackets acted like sails. I only wiped out once.

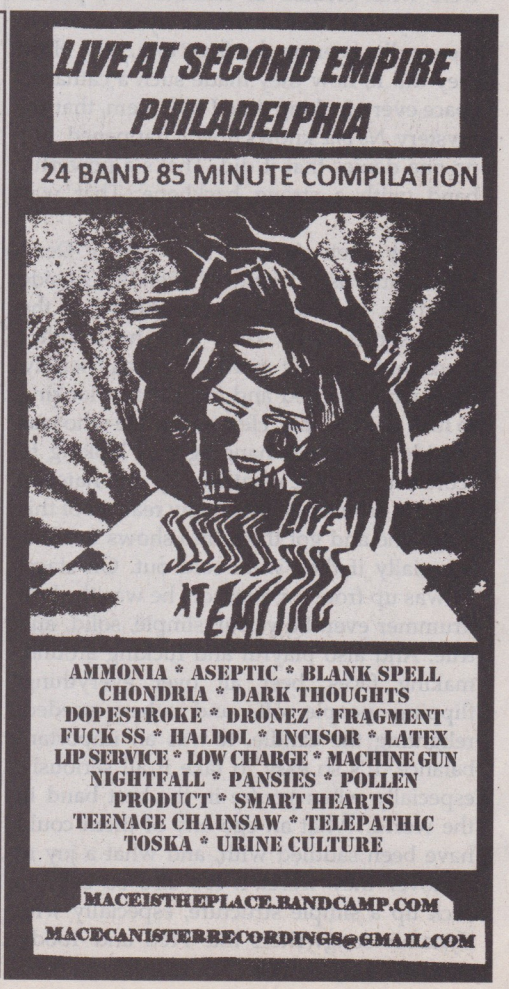
Despite running what is arguably the largest fanzine in the world, I've never identified as a "zinester," I've never attended a zine fair or fest, and I've never made my own zine. I always think of *MRR* more in the context of independent publishing (in the vein of artists, poets, and underground presses, not shitty print-on-demand!) than as a part of modern-day zine culture. In a bit that got excised from one of the interviews here, the participants talked about the distinction between a fanzine and a magazine. They said we're a magazine, but I'm not so sure. How does *MRR* fit in? What's our role in the wild and weird media landscape of 2016? We have straddled a strange line for decades now, and in 2016, the distinction seems stranger than ever. More on that in #397, in my first fully-formed column in what feels like months, I promise.

ENDNOTES:

1) Fuck *Vice*. Don't you forget it.

2) I wish we had been able to include an interview with Marc Fischer, the man behind *Hardcore Architecture*. That zine is great, but the breadth of his independent, non-punk publishing efforts is astonishing. Check out the full range of his projects at halfletterpress.com and pick up a copy of the interview he did with yours truly about the nuts and bolts of *MRR*.

3) We went to Everything is Not OK and had a blast. Maybe my next-next column needs to be about Mystic Inane, the last band I saw that weekend and almost certainly the best. I've been talking about them non-stop since, trying and failing to dissect their inimitable greatness. The other day I told Brendan that I feel lucky to be alive at the same time as this group. Europe, you're lucky, too. See them this fall. More soon.



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CHEST PAIN - Weltschmerz LP

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FISTULA - Vermin Prolificus LP

TLAL's first sludge release and this one will melt your face. In the vein of 16 and Cattle Press, Fistula bring a handful of new tracks that twist and crush. 15 years as a band and still killing it.

STILL HOT: TLAL Vol II LP, The Kill LP, Mindless EP, BearTrap EP
OUT NEXT: Afternoon Gentleman 7", Six Brew Bantha new LP

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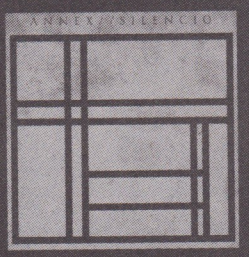

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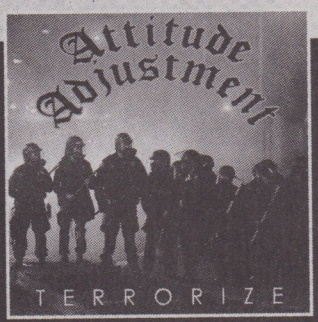

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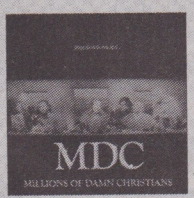

MDC-Millions of Damn Christians-LP
BCR179-1 / 650557017916

MDC-Elvis In the Rheinland-Live In Berlin-LP
BCR180-1 / 650557018018

MDC-Hey Cop...-LP
BCR182-1 / 650557018216

MDC-Metal Devil Cokes-LP
BCR181-1 / 650557018117

MDC-Shades of Brown-LP
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EVERYTHING IS NOT OK II

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK
MARCH 10–13, 2016

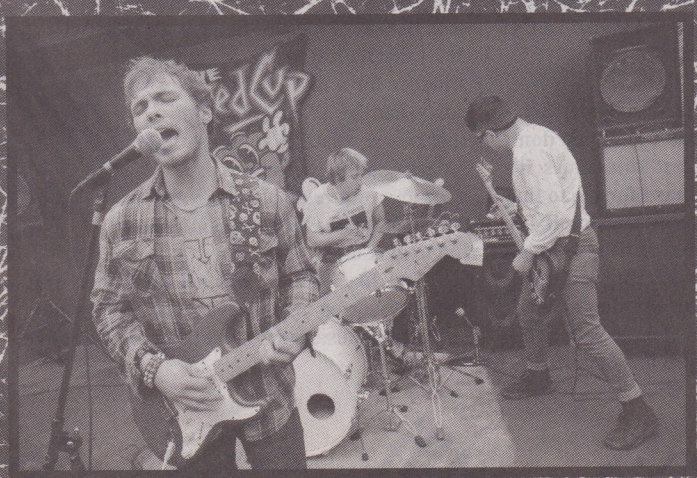
ALL PHOTOS BY GARETT FISBECK

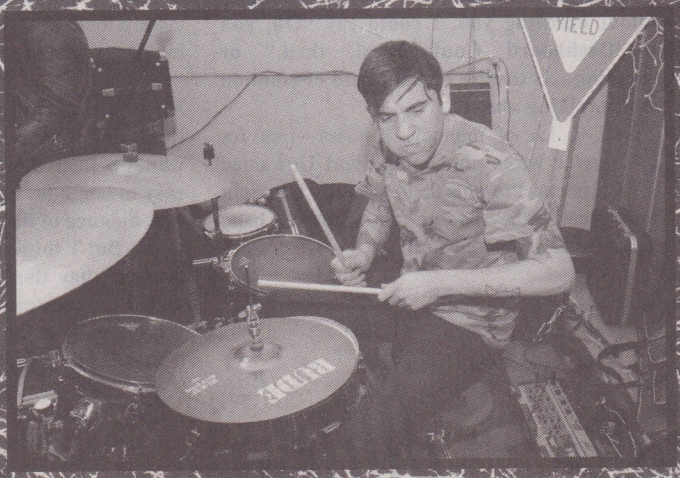
TOP ROW: WARM BODIES, ART SHOW, PHANTOM HEAD

SECOND ROW: BETA BOYS, AMERICAN HATE, MIRROR

THIRD ROW: Q, CHASM, PUNKS HANGING OUT, CCTV

FOURTH ROW: GAG, LYSOL, LIQUIDS, COMBAT KNIFE





Emmy, AKA Kretin by Distortion AKA Cretins of Distortion, *is a true freedom fighter life lover. They have shaggy dark brown hair and have recently been wearing a purple and black jacket with "Fight the Power" embroidered on the front. Sometimes they wear a handsome handkerchief kind of scarf thing around their neck. Emmy likes bands whose vocalists have high, annoying, baby snotty vocals, like the Electric Eels, Dead Kennedys, and the Crucifucks. They worked at a Staples office supply store in the Copy & Print Center until they quit. Now they work as an actor, acting out injuries they don't have for nurses in training so they can diagnosis them as part of a quiz.*

Emmy is from Indiana, but lives in Ohio. They do a really great Midwest-focused fanzine called Cretins of Distortion *and another monthly non-Midwest one called* The Mental Whiff. *Both are well-researched, look good, and have a lot of refreshing, honest opinions. They truly care about what they write about. They also play in a couple bands, like the Laminated Jils, the Grass in New York, and Slugbugs. I feel fortunate that they and I are friends. I interviewed Emmy at my kitchen table one morning in 2016 here in New York.*

Interview and introduction by Ben Trogdon.
Photos provided by Cretins of Distortion.

MRR: What kind of music do you like?

I like most kinds of music, really, except metal and hardcore. But for zine purposes, my favorite kind of punk is like Electric Eels, really damaged rock'n'roll, and then Rough Trade art punk type stuff. But I really would say I like all kinds of punk to some degree.

MRR: When you're listening to music, would you say there is something you specifically look for? Like an aspect or a feeling you really hope to hear when you're listening to new bands?

At the moment, what I wanna hear most is bands with a lot of emotion that they try to portray. Usually the less musical skill they have, the better.

MRR: If I took that out of context without knowing you, I could say "Oh, you like Dashboard Confessional, then," or something…Is there a certain kind of emotion you're talking about?

Yeah, a lot of urgency, I guess—like for *Nuts!* I wrote about that band Unwanted Christmas Presents that I'm really into right now because they had no reason to be a band except for to yell about stuff.

MRR: So more like anger or frustration instead of love or sadness?

Frustration and anger are more likely, but I think if someone expressed love or sadness in a really extreme way I would be interested in it. Very [rarely] will I be able to find music where it really seems like the person is expressing themselves in a way they might not have thought was possible before they started making music. Like, they may have had to discover this way to express themselves in the process. To hear that is really the top of what I'm looking for in audio artworks. But as far as the more obvious digging for records, digging for bands, I would say bands that use distortion and power chords but you would not really be able to call a punk band. That's a pretty interesting middle ground for me. Like Pere Ubu—a lot of people would not really consider a punk band, but they're still using a tactic a lot of punk bands use, and I think that that middle ground is a really interesting place.

MRR: Being really into inept or outsider art, I think that there is a weird line where you don't want to look down on it, but sometimes it's easy to laugh at. I guess it's hard for me to find that balance of liking something because it's so inept. But I think maybe that stuff is so good because they don't know what they're doing socially so they can hit human emotion harder?

What I really enjoy about it is you have to work to understand it and it gives you this opportunity to approach it on this level, like "Wow, this person is expressing this really extreme emotion in a way I could never see myself doing, and now I'm going to listen to it and try to understand what they got out of it, or what they tried get out of it." I think that's an interesting thing. Especially since starting the zine it's easier for me to look at a band and be like "This band started because they wanted to do *blank* thing," and I know that by the time I look at the artwork.

MRR: What about, like, Daniel Johnston?

That's kind of a line I haven't really been able to say what side I'm on. I haven't really dug deep into his work or seen the documentary about him or anything. But I always thought his songs were more fun and didn't really strike me as like "Wow, this is working on a level I haven't seen before." I mean, I believe it's there…I don't discredit it at all, I just think it's a harder for a musician to really sit down and be like "This is my shit, this is what I'm looking for personally" because it is a lot less of a relatable place and it's superficially very silly and kind of fun to look at.

…and like Wesley Willis I kinda put with Daniel Johnston in the way that a lot of people listen to his music maybe for a laugh as well as like

this interesting outsider thing. I mean, thosetwo are treated a lot more like "outsider folk artists" that are kind of a joke in the art world in a way. But I think his art is so amazing because he had all of these really serious demons, and when he sang rock'n'roll, the demons would leave him. Being able to listen to something and hear how someone feels better or releases their demons is a really special and amazing thing.

MRR: What do you like about music?

I have a lot of social and attention deficits. I have a really hard time with silence, so I always have to be listening to something or hearing something. So pretty much since I finished high school I'm listening to music pretty much anytime I'm awake. 80% of my day I'm listening to music and enjoying it. On a more romantic level of why I seek it out and love it, music really is the most accessible and relatable form of art and the most living form of culture. Everyone listens to music, and as much as people want to avoid or separate themselves from art and culture, there is music that represents everyone. There's Christian radio, there is music that represents kids who ride hover boards, there is music for every country in the world…and it all has its own qualities. You can, in a way, understand and relate to anyone in some small way through listening to their music. In the simplest answer, music is really fun. There are lots of songs that make me feel really good and so little songs that make me feel really bad.

I very often sort through my records and get rid of a lot of them and buy new ones. I think I'm trying to get to a point where each one of my records has at least one song that can really provoke something out of me. Which I really enjoy because there is nothing I can really think of that works on me like that. Sure there are books and movies and stuff, but music does it almost instantly. It's a really good [way] to connect with other people. That's why I love doing a music fanzine, because I've been doing zines since I was thirteen years old and didn't start doing music zines until I turned nineteen, but I really like doing music zines because I used to write zines and try to get really personal, get at what I was feeling, and it either really dragged me down or I wasn't able to articulate what I felt. With music, though, I can talk about this thing that is easy and superficial and work to find myself in it. Then you start to meet people who are like, "Oh, I totally felt this way about it, too!"

MRR: I've also found that in writing or talking it's really hard to express myself and sometimes you hear a song and are like, "This is how I feel." That's why music zines are so cool. This is maybe a little bit of the more primitive or younger me talking, but it's like, "This is how I feel—'Nervous Breakdown' by Black Flag," or something like that, and then some people are like, "Oh, I get that!" It hits you more directly.

And in the same way it's on such a microscopic level, like, "When I heard this guitar riff, I felt this way." It's such a small and minute part of what I feel, but also so extremely personal. It's not always there, but I've been trying to bring more of how I feel and/or act when I listen to music into my writing because music writing is usually so descriptive. So much of *MRR* feels like, "The art work is *good*, and the music is *OK*, and the record is too *short*, and the label is *dumb*." If you're just gonna write about things like that, what good does it even matter what the music you're listening to is? You could go do that with any fucking record in the store. Some people could read a review of a record and be like, "That's something I want to feel in a record"…like for example, with the Ooze record, I said, "There is this riff that just makes you feel like you could lift up a car or something it's so energizing," and some people might be like, "Wow, I haven't felt that about a punk record since Minor Threat, but I know that feeling, maybe it's worth my time to try and feel it again." But I personally don't feel myself being like, "Wow, this record has classic punk artwork, I NEED TO SEE THAT AGAIN!" I would go as far as to say when you see things—useless things—like length, or vinyl color, or the label being pointed out about a record, it makes it seem as though the record lacks substance.

MIDWEST PUNK CRETINS OF DISTORTION PUNK FANZINE
John Brannon @RealJohnBrannon · Sep 15
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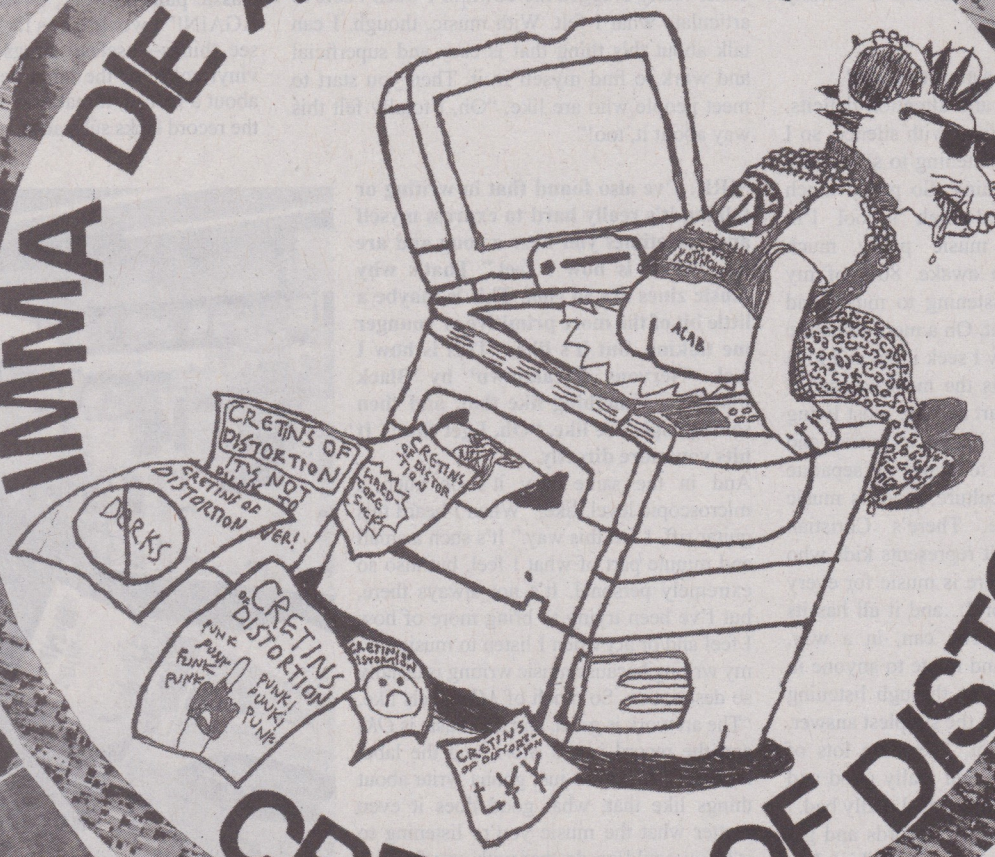

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AFTER: Horrible

MRR: What makes DIY punk special? Or is it not special?

I think it's special because it's so here and now. I was just reading something that was like, "Punk is great because it's so disposable. We didn't think about anything after we put out the record, we just wrote a song and put out the record and said 'What's next?'" You know a pop band couldn't exist for two weeks and still put out a tape and play a show, but there are thousands of punk bands that only lasted two weeks but still managed to make something of it. It's so deep and exists on so many planes because of those aspects. You know, there is a band in Columbus of teenage girls that no one knew until they gave us their punk CD—it's so present. Even in the world of Bandcamp and Soundcloud where everyone has those opportunities that punks have been using for so long, it's still so alive in DIY punk. And, while there are a lot of restrictions for people, in contrast to other styles [of music], DIY punk is so welcoming, like, "You can do it, so why not try?" That's what's so good about it. Being able to see what people do when they so quickly realize that potential. It's very raw.

MRR: Yeah, like when someone records a tape, draws their own artwork, and puts together the tapes themselves—it's the most direct way into someone's brain. There is no filter, no record label, it's just the most raw and direct way I can think of. Like, when you go look at paintings and stuff, you have to go to a gallery, and it feels out of context as opposed to going to someone's house and seeing what they hang on their walls—a demo tape is a lot like that.

Even on a small level, like, "Oh, this is the kind of band that doesn't do double-sided inserts." Every level of it says something. That's why I fucking hate tape labels. When it's self-released, there is so much of the band's character that shines through.

MRR: What kind of music do you hate?

I wanna say I hate music that sounds like music that already exists, because I think it's a waste of everyone's time... but on the flip of the coin, I think it's really important that styles and cultures are held to some degree. Like my brother is fourteen and loves the Ramones, and it would suck if he never gets to see a band that sounds like the Ramones or Discharge or Negative Approach because seeing that replicated in person was huge for me. But when you watch a grown-ass man start their fifth or sixth D-beat band in a row it feels really stagnant to me. I'd really like to say I hate shit that's just made for a record label or made for a video or made for your own personal sex appeal or something, and I do really hate the spirit of that and a large portion of bands that have done that, but lots of great music has been made with lousy motives. I mean, I love a lot of music that's really business-oriented, like tons of pop songs you hear on the radio and Motown and country shit—a really large portion of that stuff really does something for me. I'm sure some of it has a lot of feeling and love put into what I'm hearing, but I'm also fucking positive there are some people who showed up for a paycheck and wrote a song that I love. There is a lot of music I really do hate that does nothing for me, but I don't know that I could honestly bash an entire style of music as much as I might like to. I do think a lot of pop music tries to sell bands and musicians as celebrities, and that side of artists I really hate. For instance, I love Kanye West as a rapper and a producer, but I don't see mainstream music business and culture ever championing him or anyone as a producer. I think they just don't see the general public as being able to understand an artist on that level, and I think it's a real shame. If they talked about the efforts certain artists put into their work and into other artists' work on the radio and whatnot, a lot of listeners would get a lot out of it. That's a goal with my zines, at least with *The Mental Whiff*—I want to be able say "Here is a thing about a band that is really special," even if it's not something you can advertise or sell a record on. Because, as a music fan, I like to not be talked at as a customer, and the rest of the music fans out there deserve more as well. That's why it's so hard to say what kind of "music" it is that I hate, because it's usually the context of how they come into my life that I hate.

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Another Subculture

Ben Perkins does Another Subculture, *London's only cassette zine, and he is one half of the* Pub Classics *podcast. Joe Briggs writes* Brutalist Shimmy *zine and is one half of the* Fullthrottlelazy *podcast and the band Hate-Filled Kids. The following conversation took place on a comfy sofa in the wonderful DIY Space for London on a very hungover Sunday afternoon after watching* Les Miserables *on a laptop and rewriting Hard Skin songs about coppers to be about Javert. As such, much of the relevant information and pertinent points for this discussion about punk and its documentation was left by the wayside, jettisoned in favor of dumb jokes and mumbled overly emotional platitudes about mates and stuff. Enjoy.*

Introduction and interview by Joe Briggs.

Joe: Alright, introduce yourself.
Ben: [*laughs*] Hello, I'm Ben.

Joe: And what do you do, Ben?
Ben: For the purposes of this interview, I do some tapes called *Another Subculture*. I've been doing a bunch of "cassette magazines" for the past three years, one every Christmas, which wasn't intentional…

Joe: Is this a Christmas tradition now?
Ben: It's become an accidental Christmas tradition in a similar way to, I don't know, a year-end list, in the kind of, "Oh, this happened this year!" way, but it definitely wasn't meant to be this way. I guess I just forgot to do things, was too busy, and people wanted royalties, which was a bit weird.

Joe: People wanted royalties?
Ben: For the third one I wanted to interview all these Scunthorpe bands because I interviewed Mark Lancaster [of the Instant Automatons] for *Another Subculture 1,* and that was easy, just went to his house and had a nice chat. He had a Pointless trophy and everything. Mark Automaton, of *Messthetics* band the Instant Automatons, went on a quiz show with his partner, got to the final round…

Joe: Killed it.
Ben: Didn't get the jackpot but won the trophy. That's gravitas, that's a doorstop right there! So yeah, I thought it would be simple. There's this compilation called *Household Shocks* that I wanted to interview people about, but the person who was most keen lives in China and I couldn't be arsed to video-chat—probably should have done that—and others were like, "Could you put out our record as a tape?" and they wanted a hundred quid from me, which was…I just want to have a nice chat with you about Grimsby!

So, that's why it took a year. What else did I do this year? I moved back to London, so was busy going to a lot of gigs.

Joe: Gets in the way.
Ben: Life gets in the way. Poppers and...

Joe: Poppers, Bucky, and K Cider.
Ben: …Helping making DIY Space for London into an actual thing. So that's why the third one turned into what it was, [a document of the first few months of DIY Space for London]. I thought, "Well, I've spent this year helping make this place amongst a cast of thousands…"

Joe: So on the first two *Another Subculture* cassettes, the interviews are very clear: "We're gonna go to a place, I've prepared it, [I'm going to] interview this person about this thing." In the third one and other things you've done, it's all "I'm at a gig, everybody's wrecked, let's talk."
Ben: Yeah. Again, unplanned, but I've enjoyed how it's turned out.

Joe: It works.
Ben: I mean, with the first one, I was unemployed and had the time and a deposit. That's how I did it, along with funding it with my Jobseeker's Allowance. And yeah, it was very "prepared," going into interviews with questions written down. The second one was half that, and the other half was Static Shock Weekend where it was me with a dictaphone wandering around, and it kind of worked? I never knew what people thought of the recordings that were recorded in my pocket.

Joe: Live documents.
Ben: [There are] two things I've been ripping off nicely—the first one was a cassette magazine from Australia in the 1980s called *Fast Forward*, which is all online, and it was a thirteen issue thing with professional interviews, introductions, and lots of songs from local bands' demos, which is where the spirit of asking my mates for songs comes from. It helps that my mates are…the best at music—that helps? The other influence is basically a little more recent: around 2011 there was a zine called *Greatest City in the World* by Reed Dunlea, who used to do a WFMU show, too, and that was him in Chaos in Tejas, drunk and interviewing drunk members of Iron Lung with their songs in between. It's rather neatly gone from one influence to another.

Joe: It's nice.
Ben: It's messier. If you listen to the one I did about the last night at [London venue] Power Lunches it continues that trajectory, doesn't it? [*laughs*]

Joe: That one! It's great. It's that lovely feeling of "Oh, I'm listening to all these great people talk about something that means a lot to them." Also, a lot of these people can't remember what they said!
Ben: I always worry about that. I listen back with a sense of trepidation because I can't remember what I said sometimes. The Power Lunches one—which is

just on Soundcloud—half of it is on the cutting room floor because it descends into us shouting at each other about how punk has "changed our fucking life" as well as me interviewing the person who's selling me [nitrous oxide] balloons on the street. He was a very nice person and helped me get home afterwards. I think that one peaks with Bryony Beynon saying how she's seen a longboard being crushed by a fire engine and how that sums up the evening.

Joe: Do you feel like you're actively documenting something, like you sense that you're documenting it for the future, or just for now? Are you going to be some boring bastard playing this to your grandkids being all, "Listen to what Grandad got up to!"
Ben: [*sighs*] That sounds terrifying. I really don't know. I mostly enjoy it when I've put something together and then sending a tape full of great stuff on it to someone in Norway. That's a nice novelty and seeing it sat on people's shelves makes me go "Oh, okay, this is what it was like," because as it's been out every year, it's accidentally been what [UK punky] sounded like this year. I've managed to make it so that no band is on a tape twice—maybe they'll pop up in an interview on a later edition, but it's still different enough every time, and I want to keep that going because new bands are popping up all the time despite London being a cartoon.

Joe: Maybe it's good not to focus on posterity and being precious about stuff. I remember listening to interviews and reading zines from back in the day and it's really fascinating and really cool how there's no sense that they're preserving this for future generations, it's just "These are my mates, let's document how sick my mates are!"
Ben: And I hope that's what you get from the tapes, or from anyone's zines, really. I guess there's also the whole making a real thing as opposed to making a digital thing with documents.

Joe: Not just doing a blog.
Ben: Yeah. It's still quite cheap to do tapes, too. I've got the old Muscle Horse duplicator, which I think probably belonged to a church from this industrial estate, and I can just whirr away copies while watching the snooker, unlike a record where you wait for eight months, unless you're Paco, in which case it's eight days. But I don't really have that wariness about the internet, although things will disappear. People think that everything stays online forever—it doesn't, like MySpace profiles. I was wondering, with *Brutalist Shimmy*, it's basically reprinting your blog.

Joe: Mostly, yeah.
Ben: I wonder why—is that a permanent thing, something to do?

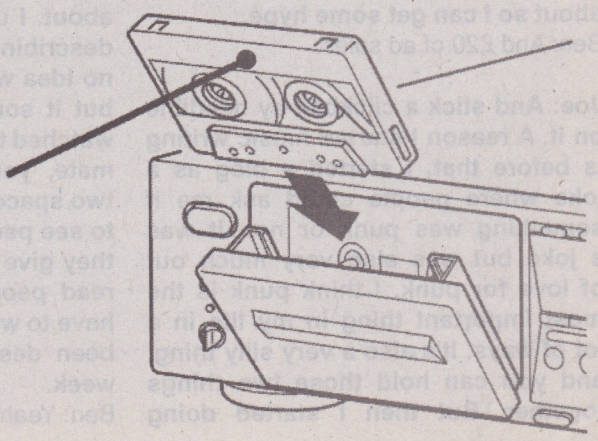
Joe: Both. Because when you're talking to people about your writing—not that I go up to people and go "Hello! I'm a writer," but it comes up—it's nice to be able to give something to somebody instead of going [in Trigger's voice from *Only Fools and Horses*] "Hey, check out my blog!" which is still a very awkward thing to say when you're talking to people who are pissed.
Ben: Give them a URL on a bit of paper.

Joe: Yeah. I wake up with all these notes in my notebook or on my phone full of random band names that I have to decipher because I've usually misspelt them or autocorrect has mangled them—things I've gotta check out. But if you wake up with a zine, it's a pleasant surprise. "Oh, someone gave me a zine. Let's give it a read!"
Ben: I do that with records sometimes! I was given a Covergirl record on New Year's Eve. Completely forgot about it.

Joe: I think the nice thing about documenting a scene is I like the way you're giving space for people to document themselves. If you want to interview people, they can say no, they don't have to talk to you. There's that thing when you love a zine when you're fifteen or sixteen, you're getting into this stuff and you feel very isolated and you read about this scene of people somewhere else and you're like, "This is so cool, wish I was part of that!" And now I feel like I am sort of part of that, but I don't want to write about it? Like a lot of people, I loved *Cometbus* as a teenager, but now if I wrote about my own experiences it'd be my view of other people, which I don't really want to write about what I think of my mates because they'll read it and be like "Really? Is that what you think of me?" Giving other people the place to write about or talk about themselves rather than you saying what you think about them, because when I write it's almost exclusively music criticism because when you're writing about a record it's very different to writing about people. A record is a document that they've put out there in order to be judged.
Ben: That's probably why with *Another Subculture* there isn't any of that, it's all "Hey, this is what's happening!" I just dangle a dictaphone in front of an amp and nick songs. I'm still a radio nerd, and it's very helpful to review music, but you need to hear it as well. We both do podcasts in amusing ways—listen to *Fullthrottlelazy*…

Joe: And *Pub Classics*.
Ben: I still get excited when I hear a DIY band on the radio in, say, Bradford, or when No Form got played on WFMU.

Joe: I'm sure with your podcast and mine there's the same impulse. What I enjoy doing is getting together with my best mate [Tommy] and talking shit about records, make some dumb fucking jokes. I've had a positive response from people, and on the one hand, it's really flattering. On the other, I assume it must be interminable, listening to us spouting in-jokes at



Tracklisting

Side A

A1 Introduction

A2 **Woolf — 'Posing, Improvising'**
From the soundtrack to 'Party For Freedom', a film by Oreet Ashery

A3 **Interview: Instant Automatons**
With Mark Lancaster (guitar, vocals, synthesizer, drums, toy piano, harmonica). Recorded in a Scunthorpe living room.
Contains excerpts from 'Peter Paints His Fence', 'Laburnam Walk' and 'People Laugh At Me (Coz I Like Weird Music)', all from 'Peter Paints His Fence' EP, Deleted Records, 1980)

A4 **The Love Triangle — 'Secret Grip'**
'Tape #6' MC (self-released)

A5 **Interview: Matt Korvette**
Webmaster of Yellow Green Red. Recorded at the Electric Ballroom, Camden.

A6 **Good Throb — 'Headache'**
'Culture Vulture' seven-inch (Muscle Horse Records)

Side B

B1 **Cop — 'Hard Cell'**
Demo recording (self-released)

B2 **Frau — 'Safety Instructions'**
Demo MC (Tuff Enuff)

B3 **Interview: Made Possible by Squatting (Part 1)**
With organiser Matt & Big Takeover-er Bryony Beynon.

B4 **Shopping — 'Long Way Home'**
'Consumer Complaints' LP (Milk Records)

B5 **Weird Menace — 'Television Screen'**
'The Weird Menace EP' MC (Suplex Cassettes)

B6 **Interview: M.P.B.S. (Part 2)**

B7 **Family Outing — 'Thicko'**
Demo MC (self-released)

B8 **DIY Vox Pops For London**
With Eva & Chris.

B9 **Hygiene — 'Fixed Odds Betting Terminal'**
'Things That Dreams Were Made Of' seven-inch (La Vida Es Un Mus, 2011)

Announcements

Every pound, dollar and bitcoin of profit from the sale of this tape will be going straight towards **DIY Space for London**, a co-operative that is working towards establishing an autonomous (and permanent!) space for DIY culture, gigs and radical activity to flourish in the capital. It's going to be fucking great. More information can be found at http://diyspaceforlondon.org/.

Did you notice the '1'? There'll be another Another Subculture soon enough, and I plan to continue highlighting the best of Humber punky. I am particularly keen to talk to anyone involved in the excellent ***Household Shocks*** compilation, released in 1980 by Scunthorpe DIY label Stark Products. **Product of Reason, Fault 151, One Gang Logic, Sinking Ships, Mystery Girls**... if you were in any of these bands, or just have some information you'd like to share, then please get in touch.

Mark Lancaster's favourite Weird Music bands include the **Digital Dinosaurs, Freshies, The Astronauts, Zounds, The Møb, Androids of Mu,** and (the concept, if not always the resulting output) of **Danny and the Dressmakers.**

Thanks

All the bands & interviewees

Marcus Giles

Evanthia Georgiou

Chris Little

Michael Oswell

Muscle Horse Records

Everybody who let me sleep on their sofa

Not easy. Cheap

each other when we're hungover and drinking cider! But again, I think it's like when you read or hear something and it's nice to hear people interacting naturally with each other in a positive way about the things that they love.

Ben: It goes back to that nice feeling of "Hey, you should listen to this stuff!" The other thing about documenting as well is the whole DIY, having your own outlets instead of a fucking *Noisey* element to it, which I think the UK doesn't have as much as elsewhere.

Joe: It's a tricky thing where the internet makes it so much easier, but there is a sense of less permanence. Like, communities can spring up, flower, and be gone with a click of a button, and we have to move onto something else. With a zine, or something like that, there is more of a sense of permanence. The documentation has gotta come from a place of love and enthusiasm instead of it coming from having to crank out 250 hacky words about this DIY band I don't give a shit about so I can get some hype.

Ben: And £20 of ad sales.

Joe: And stick a clickbait-ey headline on it. A reason I started music writing is before that, I started a blog as a joke where people could ask me if something was punk or not. It was a joke but was also very much out of love for punk. I think punk is the most important thing in my life in a lot of ways. It's also a very silly thing, and you can hold those two things together. But then I started doing music criticism after reading so many bad reviews of punk records. Not bad as in negative, but bad because they hadn't engaged in the record beyond describing it like another record. Which is OK in a way—for certain things, that's how I found out about a lot of bands—people said this sounds like another record so I listen to the other one. But if you're writing criticism, a lot of my favourite writers like Ellen Willis, Neil Kulkarni, Pauline Kael, that criticism is often better than the things they write about. It's more intense. Lester Bangs as well, where they say more about being human than whatever they're talking about.

Ben: It's why I always still pick up *The Wire* even though most of the music in there remains incomprehensible. The writing shines through.

Joe: I love reading people write about something they love in a way that's enthusiastic and they're articulating something about it even when I don't understand what they're writing about. I used to read chess columns describing a famous game where I had no idea what they were talking about, but it sounded thrilling. I'm sure if I watched the game I'd be "Fucking hell, mate, you've just moved that thing two spaces, who gives a fuck?" I want to see people writing about the things they give a fuck about. I don't want to read people writing the thing they have to write about because it's been designated for that week.

Ben: Yeah.

Joe: Maybe that's the luxury of not being a professional writer?

Ben: Well, everything's so bloody reactive, anyway. *Maximum Rocknroll* is probably one of the last places where there's no thinkpieces.

Joe: Let's start a band called Thinkpiece SS.

Ben: What do you want to see more of? More compilations, more zines, more bands...

Joe: Bands, comps, it's all part of the same thing. I don't think you can divorce any of it—I just want to see people doing things they're enthusiastic about, you know? Sort of... finding your place in the world, although that sounds a bit jembly.

Ben: That reminds me of a comic by Ramsey Beyer for *The Media*—another example of people making their own shit in the US—where she talks about the importance of punk's infrastructure underneath the bands. I mean, it's 2016 and I'm actually going to form a band which is absurd and exciting and reminds me of how *Another Subculture* was a confidence exercise in that it was a way to get back into making radio [after

dealing with anxiety], which I enjoyed doing—editing is relaxing! And now I've hopefully shown people there's a shit ton of stuff happening. I haphazardly touch upon other things happening like *STRIKE! Magazine*.

Joe: One of my favorite things in 2015 to come out of London is the *Nozin' Aroun'* video zine.
Ben: Yes!

Joe: Perfect example of this kind of stuff. There's such a warm document of something that…maybe I'm biased because a lot of people in it are my mates and my mates are the sickest cunts…
Ben: #punksismates

Joe: ...but I've watched those kinds of things from other scenes, and it's fun!
Ben: Like *My Kind of Town* [a videozine from Philadelphia]? Although those come on actual VHS tapes, which might be going a little far.

Joe: I did buy one of those.
Ben: Did you watch it?

Joe: Yes. I also had to buy a video recorder to watch it.
Ben: People managed to buy turntables and Walkmans. And floppy disk drives. Just saying.

Joe: The zine cost more than the player.
Ben: You can find them on the street!

Joe: That's very punk, mate. Obviously, when you're writing about it, recording it, you feel like you're sort of amplifying voices that you think people might not know. Like writing about queer bands, and you're writing about it because people are like "It doesn't exist," and you want to say, "No, it's here! They're there!" Not like they need it, but you want it to be there… I dunno mate, I'm too hungover for this. [*laughs*]
Ben: Same. How do we end this?

Joe: I don't know, mate.
Ben: What are our thoughts for the future? Although we've done that…

Joe: We have done that.
Ben: What should be in the next *Brutalist Shimmy*? What should be in the next *Another Subculture*?

Joe: I think my next one will be more of the same, mate. Trying to work my way around records that I love. I don't like writing about records that I hate, although it's really fun, really easy. One of the most fun things I ever did was rip a Gaslight Anthem album to shreds. 17-year-olds sent me death threats! It was fun to do that, and also cool and good, but it's a bit easy. It's harder to articulate why you like something than why you're confused by something. I've fallen off on it lately because I've been getting wrecked…
Ben: Research!

Joe: Getting research, yeah. I'm going to write it off my tax return.
Ben: Keep your Tome [the record shop at DIY Space for London] receipts.

Joe: Cider as a business expense.
Ben: It is in some industries.

Joe: I just want to keep doing what I'm doing, there's been positive feedback from a bunch of people—it's so nice when people say nice things.
Ben: I just generally blush when that happens, go "Hang on…"

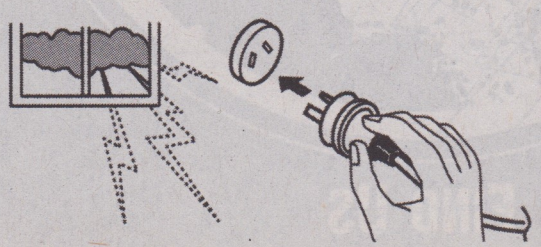
Joe: In 2016 I'm going to transition away from writing and towards getting wrecked and Twitter banter. That's it, I've changed my mind. No more zines, just Twitter and being a pisshead.
Ben: I think my plan is do that, form a band, and then with *Another Subculture 4* aim to have it out by March, actually do it for December, do more online episodes, and maybe try again with the Humberside DIY scene because I keep finding more great stuff. I don't know.

Joe: 2016: mosh out all jembles.
Ben: "Let the jembles hit the floor."

Another Subculture:
anothersubculture.bandcamp.com.

Brutalist Shimmy:
somedaysthethundergetsyou.blogspot.co.uk

Pub Classics and Fullthrottlelazy are both available to hear on Mixcloud.



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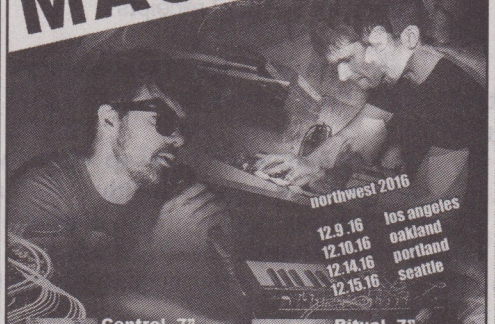

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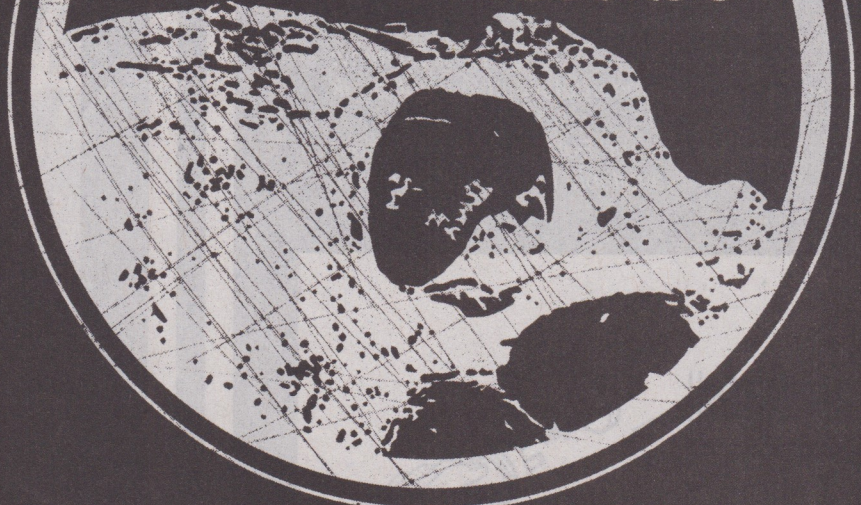

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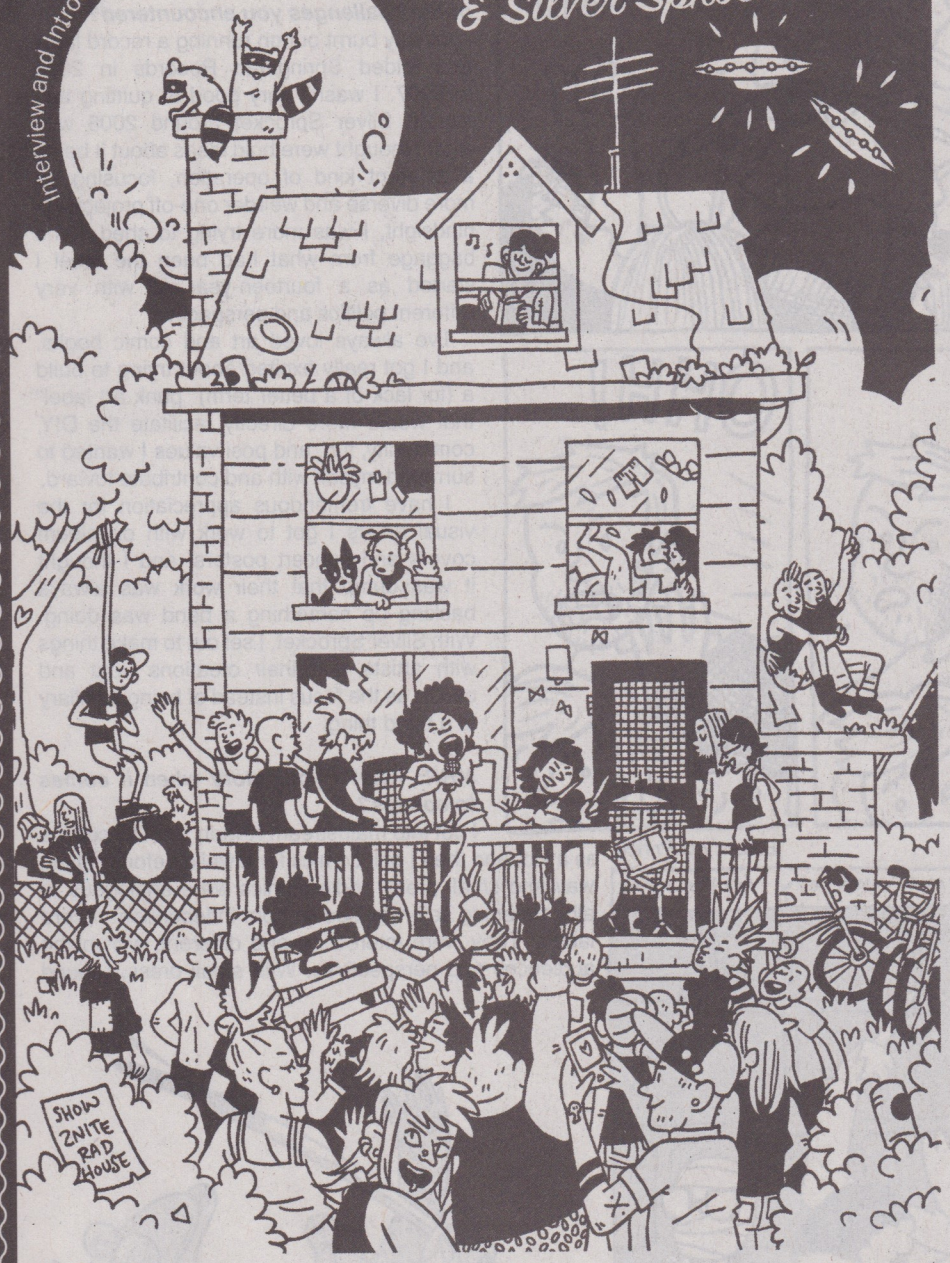
Interview and Introduction by Natalye Childress



Liz Suburbia

If you haven't heard of Silver Sprocket, I'll spell it out for you: It's a record label-cum-art/comic publisher run by some punks in a basement in San Francisco's Mission District. Since mid 2013, Silver Sprocket has been releasing As You Were, *a curated zine anthology featuring comics with a central theme from a punk rocker perspective.*

I met Silver Sprocket's lead trainwreck, Avi Ehrlich, a decade ago on the first day of journalism school when we sat next to each other and they asked me about the band tee I was wearing (it was the New Trust, for inquiring minds). For more than a year now, I've been interviewing As You Were *contributors for the Silver Sprocket Tumblr, so as someone close to the project, but not directly involved in making it happen, it seemed like I would be a good choice for interviewing Avi, too. Here they give us the background on how it came to be, how the issues get made, and what's in store for the series.*

MRR: What's the origin story of how* As You Were *began?

This was Mitch Clem's brainchild. I'd been running a record label and working with Mitch for a while, doing merch for his "Nothing Nice To Say" web comic, and we continued collaborating on projects from there.

We hoped *As You Were* would be an ongoing series but didn't know how much work it would be, or if anyone would care, so there weren't expectations beyond that first issue. Luckily, it was really fun to make and well received, so we get to keep making more!

MRR: What's the story behind the name?

I think it was the Alkaline Trio song. Mitch came up with that part, but it works for a bunch of reasons. The use I've seen in military movies about "go back to whatever you were doing" feels appropriate for soliciting people's honest stories. Life demands that we play different roles, but this is hopefully a place we can be a bit more real.

MRR: How do you come up with the themes for each issue?

We throw around ideas and try to come up with something interesting but still open-ended enough for engaging and diverse stories. "House Shows" was great to kick things off, since everyone has relatable and exciting house show experiences, and it's central to the DIY aesthetic we hold dear.

For the second issue, "The Pit" was great, but a few of the stories were really similar to each other, which was a good learning experience about talking to contributors early on about what they're working on and giving some guiding encouragement about turning in a unique story that only they could tell. "Big, Big Changes" and then "Living Situations" continued to expand the range of subject matter covered in weird new ways.

Above: Bill Pinkell

Below: Liz Prince

MRR: Initially, you ran a record label, Springman Records. Over the years, this evolved into Silver Sprocket, and though you still work with musicians, you're now publishing comics. How did this change in direction come about? What were some of the challenges you encountered?

I got way burnt out on running a record label and folded Springman Records in 2006 or 2007. I wasn't very good at quitting and started Silver Sprocket around 2008 with what I thought were bold ideas about it being a different kind of operation, focusing on more diverse and weirder one-off projects. In hindsight, I was more trying to shed some baggage from what had been the label I started as a fourteen-year-old with very different politics and perspective.

I've always loved art and comic books, and I got really excited about trying to build a (for lack of a better term) "punk art label" that would more directly facilitate the DIY, community, fun, and posi values I wanted to surround myself with and contribute toward.

I have tremendous appreciation for the visual artists I got to work with on album covers and concert posters, and I thought it was dumb that their work was always backing up something a band was doing. With Silver Sprocket, I set out to make things with artists and their creations front and center as the focus instead of being auxiliary to a band thing.

MRR: What's your story when it comes to comics?

I got into mainstream X-Men and DC comics as a kid, and then I quit comics for a while before getting way into small press. Indie comics were analogous to albums being self-released or from independent record labels. They were interesting and different, with niche audiences and perspectives. With small press, I found

comics that were way more exciting and relatable than the mainstream superhero garbage, along with a directly accessible community of creators and readers.

There's tons of overlap, too, with nerds who are into records being the same nerds who are into a lot of other things, so I don't think it's all that weird of a transition. I kept my audience and vibe while expanding the types of things I made for them. Like music or literature, prints and comics are just more mediums to communicate through in creative ways.

MRR: How do you decide who contributes to each issue?

There isn't a strict path—Mitch and I invite artists we like, and we are constantly on the lookout for new, exciting artists. A whole bunch of the new contributors are recommended to us by other artists already in the series or people we see reblogged by friends on Tumblr.

As editors, we get to be picky about if we are into someone's style and values. Lately, we've been thinking a lot about who is represented by the comics—we're excited, for example, about accidentally having a pretty balanced and diverse representation of gender identity but bummed that it's still mostly white people. There aren't any quotas or anything, but we want to be mindful about reaching out to artists who are POC and not arbitrarily leaving out important perspectives.

MRR: What qualifies an artist as "punk enough" to be considered for* As You Were*?

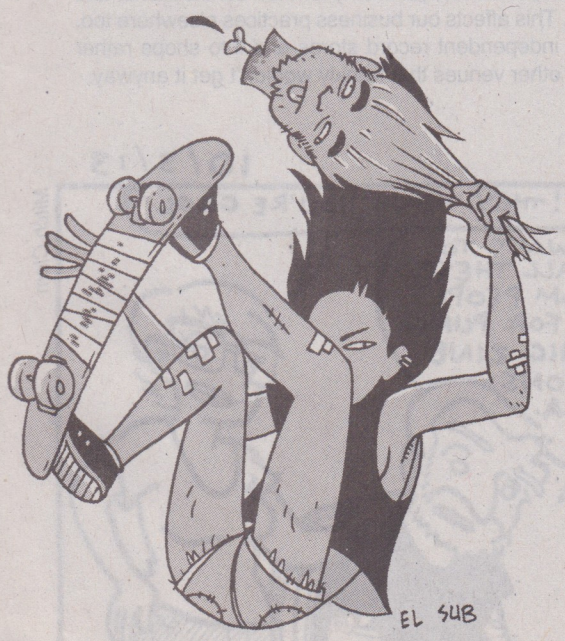
Dear God, that is a loaded question!

This is somewhere I get to be really selfish and pick out what I want punk to mean for my own intentional community instead of how the word might get used elsewhere. It's fine if people don't agree; they can make their own fanzine.

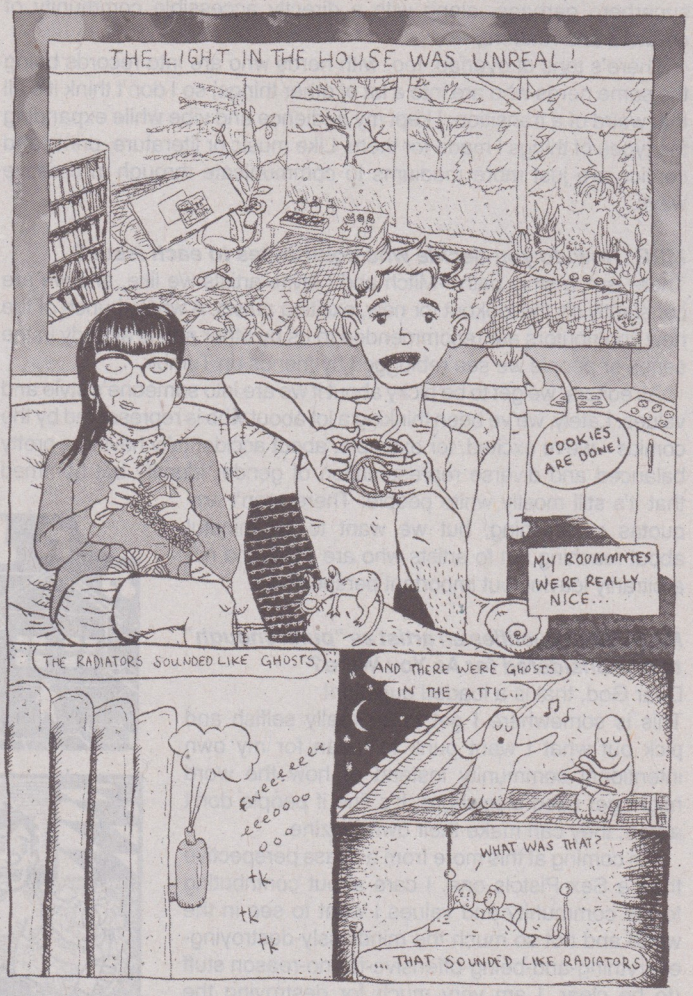
I'm coming at this more from a Crass perspective than a Sex Pistols one. I care about contributing to the community and values I want to see in the world and not so much the mindlessly-destroying-everything-and-being-offensive-for-no-reason stuff (to be clear, I am very much for destroying the things that are terrible; I'm not trying to be "polite," but I'll be as "PC" as I can, because I have yet to find a well reasoned argument against someone taking PC too far). There are "punk comics" that might run in *PORK* that I would not publish in *As You Were*, and vice versa. Their zine fits some definition of punk as people who are supposed to be jerks, but that is some bullshit I don't care to be a part of. I'm still a depressed nihilist, but I'd rather not be the weak link in the potential of a better world, at least for my small corner of it. And it's worth acknowledging terrible things in solidarity with others doing their best to survive it.

As for what that means with picking artists, it's not about hard and fast rules so much as general vibes. Some intersection of values, politics, ethics, perspective, and aesthetic. The artists have shared experiences of growing up listening to punk; being involved at various levels with radical politics; and connection with DIY through basement shows, self-publishing, and miscellaneous community involvement. The specifics get pretty diverse, and I'm into that, as it makes for a better, more rounded zine.

It gets heartbreaking sometimes, too. I sent a copy of *As You Were #3* to one of my punk scene zine-making heroes and got a letter back about how he couldn't relate to it. It was friendly and supportive but lamented that my curation of self-described punks wasn't practicing in



Brad Dwyer



the sense of punk he grew up and connects with, and he's only fourteen years my elder. It was a little ironic since the East Bay punk scene he grew up in was similarly made fun of in its time for being out of step with what punk meant elsewhere but was still instrumental in forming my own definition and connection to what punk meant and why it mattered. Punk's history includes a hopeless sense of an "us against them" existence, and maybe the "punk" word is being appropriated here by newcomers with a bit more privilege, e.g. those of us who get to make active choices about our lives instead of circumstances being 100% forced upon us. But I think (hope?) we're doing this right in a way that is honest and helpful and representative of the community we associate with and feel the most comfortable existing in.

The punk thing for me also includes values of how the artists get treated, e.g. maintaining ownership of their work and being free to publish it elsewhere, being respected and paid fairly for their contributions, and keeping costs down. This affects our business practices elsewhere too, like reaching out to independent record stores and info shops rather than chain stores or other venues that frankly wouldn't get it anyway.

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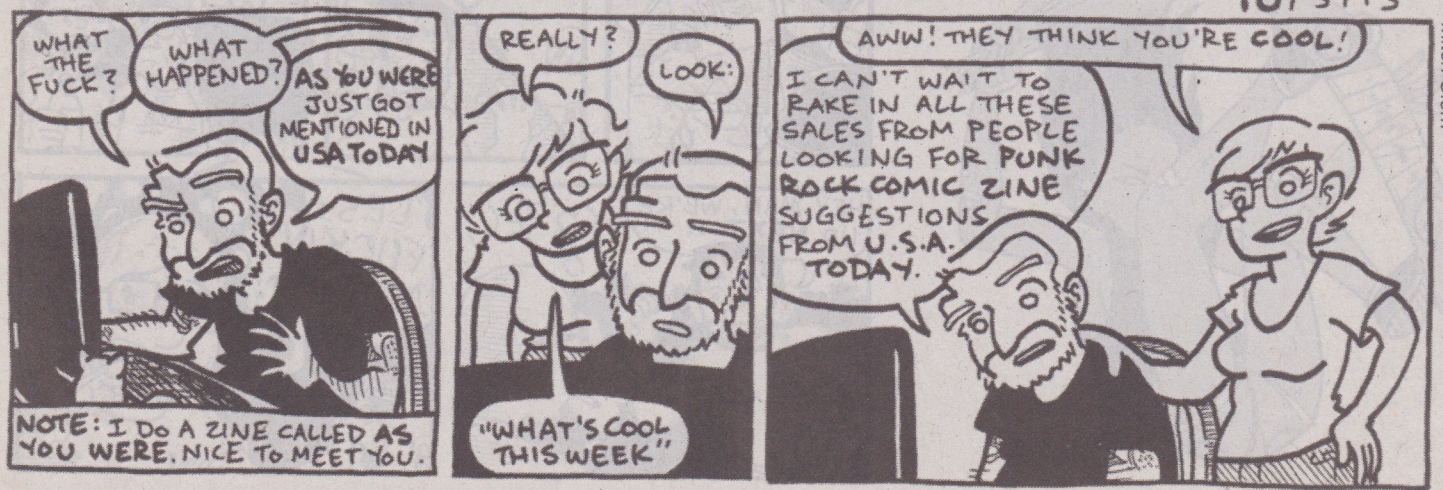
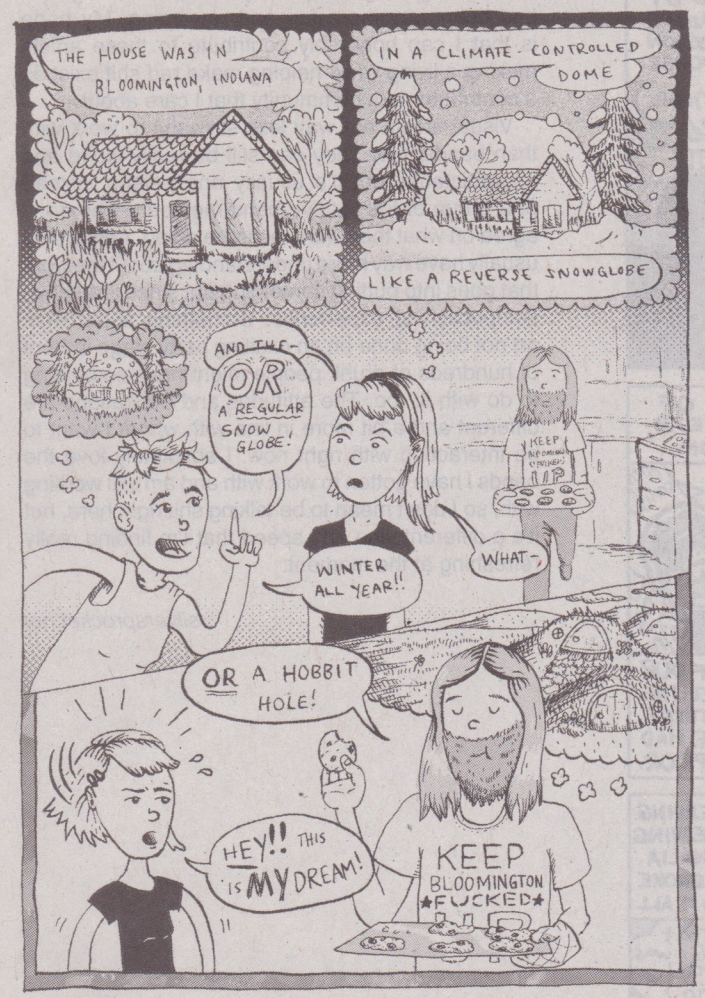


Mitch Clem



MRR: Each issue has new names, but a lot of the artists are repeat artists. Are you afraid of falling into the trap where it's basically homogenous or like a club of friends? What kinds of things are you doing to make sure you attract and include new/different talent?

I *love* that it's turning into a "club of friends," but I disagree about it being all repeats since about half the contributors to each new issue are new to the series.

Bands get to build community by playing shows together and touring, something the disjointed "punk comics and art scene" has a lot of trouble with. Sure, there is Tumblr, and there are zines like *MRR* and *Razorcake* that run comics, and there are regional comic conventions, but I'm really excited about getting to intentionally connect these artists from all over the place. These *As You Were* books are a lot like compilation albums that someone would pick up for the handful of artists they like and then discover a whole bunch of new treasures.

It's also been great getting mail from new artists who saw work in *As You Were* and thought, "Hey, I could do that." We publish plenty of established, known artists, but we also feature first-timers who have only previously been on Tumblr or in handmade zines scanned at work or school.

We invite everyone we've ever published to hang out at our table at comic book conventions, zine fests, and music festivals that we set up a booth at. I am really stoked about getting to make this a platform to hopefully help everyone involved with whatever networking or skill sharing they're after.

The goal of helping artists and fostering community goes beyond the anthology series. This isn't changing the world or anything, but I'm really excited about how we've been publishing a weekly feature and interview about our favorite artists who have interesting stories and are deserving of more attention, which is online at tumblr.silversprocket.net.

There have been great artists who have outgrown us too—sometimes directly from their work being seen in *As You Were*—who are now making books with bigger publishers or magazines. I am way supportive of that since it brings more attention to older books in the series and shows that we're doing something right. A rising tide lifts all boats, and I want to help lift everyone's boat the best I can.

MRR: Many of your artists do a lot of color work, but* As You Were *is printed in black and white. What about the artists who don't work in black and white? Was there ever a discussion about publishing in color?

Our current circulation would make it impossible to cover costs while printing in color, but I'd love to someday.

However, doing the series has established rad working relationships with some of my favorite artists, and I'm pretty ecstatic about getting to release standalone books this year from *As You Were* alumni, including full-color work from Liz Suburbia, Ben Passmore, and James the Stanton.

MRR: How much editing is involved?

I try to be as empowering to the artists as possible in letting them tell their story the way they want, all while making sure it fits in with what the book needs to be. We ask for economic use of pages: to use as much space as the story needs but to not do that thing where each page could have been a panel.

More recently, I've been trying to be more secure as an "editor" in reaching out to artists and asking about how their stories are coming together earlier in the creation process to offer technical suggestions to make sure the art will look good in print. We're happy to be hands-on with feedback and advice to make the stories the best they can be, or hands-off to let the artists do their thing, which they've already demonstrated being good at to get invited in the first place.

MRR: What is your end game?

I'd love to keep doing these as long as it's fun, but nothing is forever, and I expect the series will run its course at some point. We don't have a publication schedule, so we get to make these at our own pace of about one every six months.

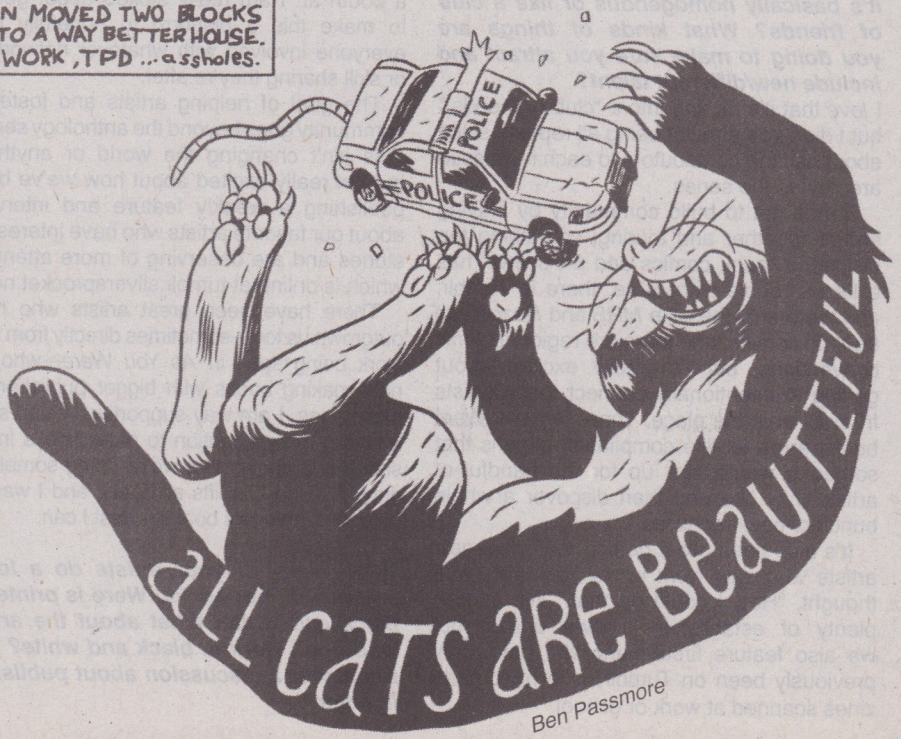
I'd really like to open up a destination gallery space here in San Francisco that doubles as the Silver Sprocket office and a limited storefront. This fanfic includes inviting artists to have residencies and letting them pick out the appropriate bands to play their opening and closing receptions, with beautiful fliers of their design. Gatherings right now are mainly around concerts, and sometimes activism, but I think we have potential for a whole lot more.

***MRR: What is the most rewarding aspect of putting out* As You Were?**

In a lot of ways, it kept me involved in punk or "DIY/art/whatever" because running a record label was getting really shitty. What I'm doing now has been way more fun and rewarding. My hope is that I can honorably contribute to these artists making a living while helping make rad shit exist as a contributor to a community that I care about.

Visual artists are way less stressful to work with than bands, too. They can still be really weird and unpredictable, but it's usually one person instead of a group of four or five band members who don't agree on what they want me to be doing. Artists also usually have way more understanding about the work that goes into putting something out since they have self-publishing experience. Something about their art not being done on an exciting party stage in front of hundreds of drunk people might have something to do with it, too. The attitudes and aspirations are different and a bit more in line with whom I want to be interacting with right now. I absolutely love the bands I have gotten to work with and am still working with, so I don't mean to be talking shit right here, but it's a different vibe and speed that I'm finding really refreshing at the moment.

silversprocket.net



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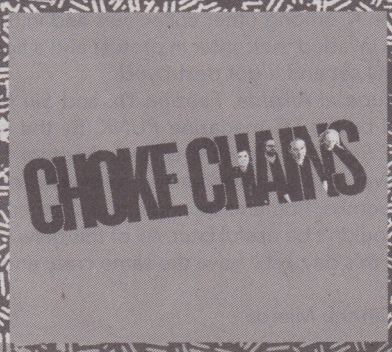

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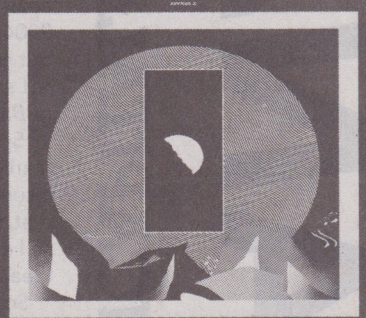


AVENUE Z "AZIMUT"

BLACK GLADIATOR

SLOVENLY RECORDINGS

MONDO

FANZINE MIERDA

ANTICAPITALISMO AUTONOMÍA CULTURA RADICAL

I am not sure when I met Dani Frutos of Fanzine Mierda. *Around ten years ago I moved back to Spain after nearly a decade living in England and a brief stint in the USA. In what I recall as one of the worse ideas I've ever had, I moved to Madrid. I travelled to Barcelona on the regular to visit friends and to be in touch with a punk scene more in line with what I liked that the one in the city where I lived. Those were the years when Invasión, Über, and OTAN were starting. There was a lot of activity around the Ateneo Libertario del Besós and as a* foreigner *I was lucky to witness new bands developing into what later people from abroad would consider the new Barcelona Punk Scene. I guess I never met Dani then, although he was around the Ateneo both with No Caos in which he played as well as being a vital part of organizing things. Over the years I kept visiting Barcelona and making more friends. I met Dani but I don't think I would say he was my friend.*

The first time I connected with him and realized he was a genius was when he started playing bass in the second incarnation of Destino Final. I will never forget the last meeting I had with that band outside their practice space, a meeting when for some reason I felt I that I was connecting more with him that with the rest of the band. He was the "voice of reason" during that meeting. I think that from that day on I have considered Dani a good friend. He is someone I think of as a hard one to crack. He is a sober anarchist with firm principles in days when it seems like everyone around us has doubts about absolutely everything they believe in. He has remained a staple in the anarchist punk scene of Barcelona through his fanzine Mierda *in which he writes sharp and acidic observations of his surroundings as well as playing in guitar in bands like Absurdo, XM2 or now Ultra, booking shows, working at the CNT bookstore, and recording a lot of bands. He is also an activist and a really critical person with whom I don't see eye to eye with on lots of things but who overall I respect highly and find to be an immense source of inspiration. A good friend. A humble guy who I could talk to for hours to no end over coffee in his Barcelona de Plástico and who I always hit up when I visit the city. A few months ago we discussed an interview for* MRR *over one of those coffees and here you have it. I hope you enjoy it and that it might give you some insight into what Barcelona is like.*

Interview and introduction by Paco Mus. Translation by Mariel Acosta.

MRR: Please introduce yourself and tell us a little bit about when and why you started the *Fanzine Mierda*. How did you get into punk and anarchism?

I got into punk through some k7 cassettes my parents had. They had recorded the audio of several rock'n'roll TV shows that were released in the '80s. I'm talking about those TV specials presented by Miguel Rios where they would feature bands like Alaska y los Pegaminoides, Ilegales, Siniestro Total, Ramoncín, Loquillo, etc. These are bands that somehow marked the history of punk in Spain. The show was called *Que noche la de aquel año*, if I'm not mistaken.

Later I began listening to "Anarquia y Agua Fria," the radio show hosted by Teodoro from OTAN and other people. I thought the music they played was horrible, but I had a blast listening to them, and they also exuded a lot of energy and attitude. Between that and La Polla Records and Eskorbuto, I got hooked on punk and felt more identified with it. I got a horrible mohawk and began to go to shows. I think the first band I saw live that was more or less related to punk was Inadaptats right after they released their most hardcore record, *INDP*. I'm talking about the years 2001, 2002, 2003, approximately.

For better or worse, I think I've been an anarchist since I was nine or ten years old, not because I decided so, but because my parents had affinity with anarchism and obviously at that age you are what your parents tell you to be. In any case, I took a more serious interest and read on the subject by the time I was twelve or thirteen through some issues of *Ajoblanco*[1] and some books from the Alianza publishing house that were around the house.

When I got my first record, Sin Dios, the symbiosis between anarchism and punk was complete, and you can't image how hard it was for me to undo that. Besides, at that time in Barcelona for a lot of people being an anarchist and being involved with punk—moving around squats, etc.—were related. To me it was unthinkable for every history to be separate. You have to take into account the huge punk explosion Barcelona was experiencing when I was a teenager, or at least that's what I perceived. There were several infoshops, shows, vegan kitchens (La Loqueria, Carrer Sense Nom, and the Centro Anarkopunk in San Andreu), several squats and social centers in every neighborhood, etc. It was the "boom" of the Iberian anarcho-punk through the FAP and people like Oskar con K, among other collectives and initiatives. In 2004, the Nazis killed Roger and a horde of furious punks invaded the center in protest and a fight broke out in front of the city hall where there was a huge nativity set and it got destroyed.

I started doing *Mierda* when I got my first zines, *Eskupe al Alkalde*, *Fanzine Yo*, and *Sin Fronteras ni Banderas*. At the graphic level, I was very influenced by the US magazine *PUNK*. By the late '70s, in Spain, some issues of an underground press called *Rock Comix* were edited. Another zine that marked me and a group of colleagues for its radical, novel, and groundbreaking tone was *Tensión*, an insurrectionist publication that explained how to make bombs, homemade napalm and other stuff like that, the kind of things that impress you at first but that wouldn't be useful later. All of this blew my mind, so I also wanted to create my little punk paper spawn. To this day, I still have the same crazy and childish ideas in my mind.

So anyway, my name is Frutos, and I'm the editor of *Fanzine Mierda*.

MRR: Is it fair to say that *Mierda* is an anarchist and punk publication? What do you mean with anarchist and punk?

The first issues of *Mierda* are very much identified with anarchism and punk. Right now those are two subjects that continue to interest me, but I wouldn't define any of what I do and relate them with identity

1. Seminal Spanish libertarian magazine

codes so marked. I don't see the point in that. Obviously punk and anarchism continue to be a part of my life and of the zine.

I have to say that the last issues I've put out are more about the parameters of counterculture in general. If that's punk or not well, I have no idea, though probably from outside it may not look punk. In any case, I feel punk, my way, but I'm a punk all the way, I'm not going to disown something that has given me so much life. To me, Nazario is the punkest guy in the world, and Anarcoma is also super punk, so if a guy like Nazario is a punk, then so am I, and whoever doesn't see that, well, deal with it.

MRR: The editorial approach seems to be pretty harsh and dogmatic. You speak often in the third person plural. Who are you referring to?

When I used the third person, it was to attack or criticize someone without mentioning their name directly in order not to hurt them personally in an unnecessary way. You can do something to allude to someone without exposing them publically.

It has never been my intention to say what's right or wrong or to pontificate. If I've been harsh or visceral on occasion, it has been to generate a debate surrounding a question I deemed relevant. In any case, people barely pay attention to *Fanzine Mierda*, so the editorial line it may have doesn't matter because it has no influence.

MRR: *Mierda* fits into a scene that was born from the Ateneo del Besós. Looking back, what do you think has changed in the punk scene in Barcelona between those years and now? When you began, there were already a lot of zines, but it seems that there are hardly any left. What happened?

Well, for those of you who don't know, and that's probably the majority of those who are reading this, the Ateneo Libertario del Besós is an anarchist space where for many years a large group of people with diverse backgrounds got together to organize activities, shows, and vegan kitchens, or to take part in the different political groups that met there. As far as I remember, and leaving aside short-lived projects, bands like OTAN, Firmeza 10, Invasión, Crosta, Absurdo, Antipasma, Las Otras, Chip Subcutáneo, and others were formed there or practiced at that space. Some issues of *Mierda* were reproduced with the copy machine from there, and the first show I ever organized in my life also took place within that space's walls.

What has changed in Barcelona's punk? To answer that question, it's best you ask someone with more experience; surely someone like Alejo from Grita o Muere, Tete from Suicidas, or Silvia from Colores de Guerra can give you a better account. In any case, I have the impression that in the last eleven or twelve years, more or less the years I've been involved, the punk scene in the city has evolved a lot. To put it simply, if before we exercised a cultural resistance against the official policies of the city, now we have become just another subculture among many others.

When I started listening to local bands and going to shows, the normal thing was for them to take place at squats and for all bands to have some anarchist content in their lyrics. There were many things going on besides shows, like vegan kitchens, distros, radio shows, etc. And yeah, there were many zines, but most were trash.

In my mind, the first band that marks a change of perspective was Invasión with their recording style, their way of releasing records and touring, and with the influence of your label, La Vida es un Mus. I don't know what would have happened without La Vida es un Mus, but what is clear is that the way you work has resulted in heavy-duty consequences: now most people that form a band want you to release their record, to be featured in *MRR*, and to play at a big fest or tour the US. That's not a good or a bad thing; that just is.

Everything has a good side and a bad one. It's true that many years ago there were a lot of punks in the anarchist spaces, but it's also true that everything was much more endogamous, and, in general, the discourse was excessively charged, surreal, and it lacked analysis. Go figure, what sense does it make for a punk to consider themselves a primitivist while living in the city, for example. Situations like this were common. I remember that a lot of punks involved in the anarcho-punk movement of the 2000s started saying they were queer and began wearing skirts and makeup to go out, but later in the affective-sexual context they were super close-minded heterosexuals. There is some danger in that concern to make something super politicized and coherent out of punk. I doubt in the viability of changing something important or structural in society through a band or a movement that's basically a youth movement. I'm talking about historical moments in which other countercultures have played a role in somewhat revolutionary or groundbreaking events like on May of '68 or during the riots in Holland where the *provos*—the Dutch Situationist movement—and the *nozems*—a youth gang in Amsterdam—and others participated. A lot of graffiti, a lot of stuff happening, and a lot of history, but until the working class didn't strike, the government didn't mobilize the army.

Nowadays in Barcelona, people that go to punk shows are rarely politically organized. Instead, we count on different really powerful

anticapitalist initiatives, like neighborhood assemblies, and the Anarchist Federation of Catalonia or the Banc Expropiat that have a lot more social support than when punks participated in those kinds of projects. Events like the Can Vies riots or the fights that broke out in the last general strikes were expressions of the collective anger that I doubt would have happened ten years ago. We also didn't have a purely anarchist athenaeum with a gender perspective as marked as that of l'Espai Pandora de Poblesec, mainly because a lot of anarchists were opposed to feminism. At the same time, I believe that more recently, new playing styles and interesting projects wouldn't have been formed in a context where punk was more ideological. I can't imagine that it would have occurred to anyone to form a band like Una Bèstia Incontrolable back when Elektroduendes was what caught people's attentions.

I don't understand why people don't write or publish in paper as they do in other formats. It bums me out. Anyway, there still are some zines around; what happens is that you and I aren't interested in them so much.

MRR: Are you one of those people who thinks that from a while back until now Barcelona punk has gotten too much attention and that's destroyed it? What do you think caused the sudden interest in Spanish punk in the last years?
I think that what has hurt punk in Barcelona is that when we realized that in Europe and in the US, people were paying attention to us, we tried to adapt to codes that were foreign to our context in order to appeal to the scenes outside of Spain. There's something tacky about it, you see the bands from the USA wearing particular styles, releasing records with one label or the other, and you end up cheaply copying what they do. Nowadays, for the majority of punks in Barcelona, having a distro, managing a social center, or being involved in a political project are not priorities; however, it is a priority to release a good LP or tour frequently. All of this, together with the fact that the mayor's office has become more strict with squats, has put us in a situation where there are fewer venues to play shows. There is no reach towards the actual city. As a result, it's become increasingly harder to book shows, there are fewer bands, and it takes hard work to see new faces at shows.

Anyway, everything has a good side and a bad one. I don't want to repeat myself, but I would like to point out, or to explain rather, something that I commented on in the last question: Key punk records wouldn't have been able to be released without the mentality of trying to form bands with an approach towards aesthetics and music as a form of competitiveness with foreign punk, so to say. Some of those records were the first LPs from Invasión and from Crosta—which, believe it or not, was a band concerned with reaching beyond their close surroundings. We also wouldn't have gotten great bands, in my opinion, like Belgrado, Ciudad Lineal, or Chroma. It's not like we didn't have relevant bands before, of course, but they produced a different kind of material.

I don't know why Spanish punk is popular now, I have no idea, but I think it is very popular now in London. It's worse for everyone. At least here you can come and check out a show or something, and then you can go to the beach, have a sangria or eat paella, you see; what good is there in the English fish and chips and their hot beer?

MRR: Going back to Barcelona, there's an independentist movement happening in your region right now. What is the role of a publication like yours, or yourself as an anarchist individual, in the midst of this situation? You write your texts sometimes in Catalan and other times in Spanish. You also mentioned to me not long ago the idea of editing an issue in English. Do you have a distinct audience, or is there a reason behind the changing of languages?
My publication doesn't have any role in a process like the one we're living in Catalonia. In my opinion, anarchists, autonomists, anticapitalists, etc. should take advantage of the occasion to put some crucial issues on the table. You don't want to be a part of the Spanish state? Well then, what about NATO or the European Union? We would need to leave them, right? However, that can't be done as an individual, but as a movement putting pressure from the streets and mobilizing.

I think the independence is a good thing because the idea of a Spanish nation-state is an aberration to me. At the same time, it pisses me off that capitalists have used the issue of the independence and the unity of Spain to eliminate the social from the public debates, when, for the first time it was a topic that was discussed by everyone. On the other hand, I don't believe that the solution to one state is another state; I hope that this process helps circulate the ideas of other forms of social organization, but that's not going to happen.

Regarding the changing of the language, I always write in Spanish, but most people that collaborate with *Mierda* do so in Catalan. For Mar, for example, to write in Catalan is a political decision. She doesn't want to have to write it in a language that's foreign to her and that's imposed. So, come on, I'm not gonna be the one to translate her to Spanish.

About the English language edition, I published it because a lot of people that are interested in the zine write to me from Europe and the US, and I thought that it'd be cool to make a compilation in English.

MRR: Every time I read your writings I want to argue with you or beat you up. You project an image that's too puritan and arrogant for my taste. Is Frutos really like that? Is there anything you regret writing?
There's a lot of bullshit that I've written in the zine or said in bands that I've played with that I wouldn't say now. I don't regret anything, what's done is done, but I am self-critical, and I criticize what I write, and there are tones and forms that shouldn't be repeated. The times when you're too sarcastic, or when you're too harsh with projects that don't deserve it, they get back to you. You end up hurting good people who are not to blame for your craziness or your opinions, and that's not good and doesn't contribute in any way.

All in all, I doubt that what makes you wanna beat me up is any of the bullshit that I wouldn't write now, though if there's something really bad, please tell me so that I can burn all the copies I have left of that issue. At the same time, I assume that if you fuck up, there's someone ready to punch you in the face; you can't go about messing with people without getting a reaction.

MRR: Another thing is that whenever I read *Mierda* or when I speak with you (and with other old friends from Barcelona), I feel there's an excessive stagnation. I'm aware that you prefer things in your city to be just as they were before, but do you believe it's possible to build a new discourse with a point of view that's stuck in the past? For people who don't know what we're talking about, what do you think are the more visible changes your city has experienced in the last few years?
I really wouldn't want to go back to 2006 or 2007. And that's true, you can't build anything while being stuck in the past. There are some people that complain all the time that punk is now for hipsters, talking about people that are passé, that this or that guy lacks ethics, etc. I think that if punk doesn't give you what you want then why don't you get involved in other kind of projects that fit your needs and desires? In Barcelona, there are hundreds of relevant political projects in which you can participate if you want to do something more involved, why don't you get into that? In the end, everything gets reduced to the fact that we get used to specific dynamics and any change breaks our framework.

On the other hand, and this is very important, although everything seems to be less overloaded with slogans and a careless attitude is portrayed, in the practical sense there are many more women organizing shows or playing in bands, and honestly, I prefer a feminist punk scene; tough, because if there are a lot of women it doesn't necessarily mean they're feminists. I prefer a scene that's comfortable for people from any kind of gender identity to an anarchist, violent, and masculine punk scene. Like, I believe that it's more political for punk to be a space where people feel empowered than for it to be the space where anyone can start lecturing you on who Durruti was and what's right or wrong as if those are the things that matter in life.

The only thing that I really miss is the sense of community that has been lost. I think that's a shame, and I'm not the only one that feels that, although go figure, maybe I'm the outcast of the class.

I wish that those of us who live in the city could go back to stimulate any form of cultural expression that's autonomous and radical and that exposes most of the people to other forms of living and seeing reality. I feel more nostalgia for the anarchist conference of '77—

where, by the way, the Banda Trapera del Rio and Mortimer played—than for 2007. Punk wasn't even born; I wasn't even born yet.

MRR: *Mierda* is very critical towards today's punk. Do you believe everything is really a circus, or do you think that there are still places that haven't turned into fashion shows and have things to contribute? Do you think it has become an old formula?

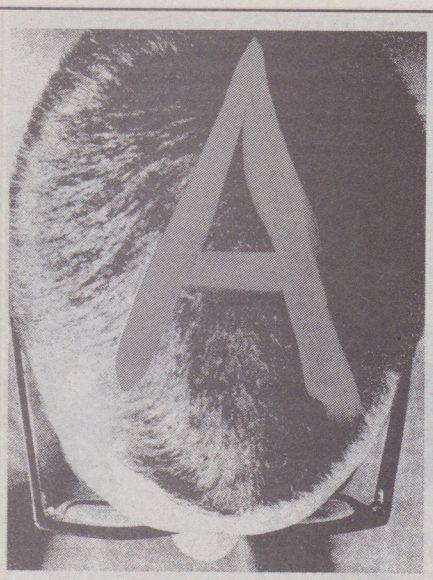
Of course I think punk can still contribute. An example would be the boom of bands with feminist undertones in the last years. From Barcelona alone I can think of Flujo, Las Otras, Rote Zora, Piñen, Turbulentas, Baula, etc. These bands are breaking ground, creating safe spaces for diverse communities, and redefining the way in which we interact with culture and creativity. I think that all of this is important. I'm also under the impression that a bunch of bands, especially in Mexico, the US, and other parts of the world, are going back to punk's discourse, aesthetics, and sound, and to me that's something exciting, and it's worth it. I wouldn't say that they're repeating the same formula over and over, and it's not like I think bands like Tercer Mundo or G.L.O.S.S. are snobs and assholes without anything to say or that they are revolving around the same clichés.

On whether if punk has turned into a showcase or not, well, I guess yes, it has. Time will change the way that's reflected. A few years back in Barcelona, you had to be super political, vegan, and straightedge. Now you have to be an artist, a photographer, illustrator, smoke opium, or who knows what other bullshit. Every generation has its nonsense.

What pisses me off is the people that see it as a mockery, beating people up in the audience and bullshit like that. Makes you think "What's the point in doing that?" Especially when you're weak and a coward! Go to Kurdistan to fight to see if you stop being so stupid!

Another thing that pisses me off is that the people with money are the ones that come and set a trend, they make most people focus on other interests that have nothing to do with their daily life. That's why I prefer Generación Suicida a thousand times even if they say "*fucking slut*" [in one of their songs] over any European or North American lame band.

MRR: Not long ago the anarchist movement in the [Iberian] peninsula was under attack twice with operation Pandora and operation Piñata. In the last issue of *Mierda* you dedicate a lengthy article to the topic. Do you want to talk about what happened and how things are now?



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22/6/13
EXTINCIÓN DE LOS INSECTOS
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Casal Joves Guineuta

CONTRA EL ABURRIMIENTO MORTAL
DEL CAPITALISMO POST-INDUSTRIAL
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MDA VOL. 1

Contracultura y Anarquismo en la Barcelona de los años 70, con Pepe Ribas de Ajoblanco

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PUNK PUNK PUNK

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COMUNISMO LIBERTARIO SIEMPRE

Actually, there have been five cases of macro-level operatives against Spanish anarchism: Operation Column, Operation Pandora I, Operation Piñata, Operation Pandora II, and the arrest of members of the Straight Edge Madrid collective. Right now I don't have the updated information, but about forty people were indicted and are waiting for trial. They were accused of different crimes related to terrorism, three of them are still in jail, and Monica and Francisco have been in jail for two years now. This has been the biggest blow against anarchism since the transition period [from Franco's dictatorship to democracy] and without a doubt it will mark the before and after; not only is the state after those who are directly accused of having done this or that, but it also criminalizes everyone. Kind of like in the Basque Country but keeping up appearances because here they haven't killed anyone or tortured anyone that we know of. Well, there's like 500 members of the Basque nationalist left imprisoned. Go figure, 500 anarchists in the klink, that's impossible—there aren't that many of us! Hahaha!

After many years of social conflicts and the disappearance of ETA, the state has created an internal enemy with the purpose of justifying its expenses and jacking up prices. At the same time, the state has sent a message to everyone that mobilizes and organizes politically outside of the margins of institutional logic, whether they are an anarchist or not. What they're saying is, "If you mobilize, whether you participate in violent movements or not, we're gonna watch you, so be careful and stay calm at home." After the last general strikes, the 15M[2] and the marches for dignity, etc., it's not a surprise that the state reacted in that way.

I'll take this opportunity to share something that left me in shock and sad. Some people from the US that I was in contact with after we met during Absurdo's tour there stopped replying to my emails when they found out that my house was raided during the first wave of arrests. I was super bummed. What do you care what the state says? Have you been in my house or have I been in yours? You know I'm not a terrorist and that I have no intentions of hurting anyone, and even if I did illegal stuff, what's wrong with that? Do laws even follow moral standards?

MRR: Speaking of the last issues of the fanzine, one thing I found interesting is the opening up towards new influences. I found particularly interesting the newspaper article "Underground Iberica." Is this finally a rupture with the classic aesthetics of the punk fanzine? Is that the new path you want to take the zine to? Don't you believe that maybe newspapers are dead as a format?

I've never thought of newspapers as a format that's dead. What I do know is that I love it when I get an issue of *Ajoblanco*, *STAR* or *Me Llaman Fascista*[3] and it feels like I'm holding pure life in my hands. Come on, I'm planning to continue to edit zines while I can; that's something I love for others to do and that I also love doing, and I don't care if I sell 1,000 copies or just 10 of any issue I release.

Spanish counterculture, the North American Free Press, and the English tabloids from the '60s and '70s are the kind of press that fascinate me ,and I wish I continue to have the sources, the willingness, and enough information to continue to delve deep into that kind of topic.

MRR: A while ago you and some people in Barcelona were trying to coordinate the publication of something more serious, with more influence. What happened with that? Is there no way to work as a team? What do you think about the people from *MRR* wanting an interview with you? Are you one of those who think that you're not acknowledged unless people from the US are interested in you, while there can be a million zines or projects equally or more interesting that people don't pay attention to unless the idols from abroad pay attention to them?

The teamwork to set something up other than a band or a show is always complicated and expensive. The divisive moment we're going through now sucks; it would be a miracle for more than four people to get together and do something collectively. And yeah, we were trying to set up a punk publication among several people with a broader distribution and with a bunch of contributors, but in the end that didn't go anywhere because everyone would pass on everything. In the end only the same people remained in the project, and it ended up collapsing. By the way, I'd like to remind you that without the help of Hector el Mierda it wouldn't be possible; he argues with the printing press all the time, gives money when needed, and he did the layout of the last issue.

The truth is that I don't give a fuck if in the US there's more recognition or visibility than in other parts of the world, I love punk but I'm not such a freak to be worrying about it. *MRR* is cool, I like that they like me.

MRR: Future projects?

I'm preparing an issue in homage to *Ajoblanco* in brochure format together with a friend, we'll see if it comes out soon. On the other hand, it's almost certain I'm making a new zine. It will not be *Mierda*, I'm changing the name. I'll keep you posted.

industriasmda@gmail.com
industriasmda.wordpress.com

2. Anti-austerity movement, active since May 15, 2011. For many people, the movement sparked what has been named a "new politic" in Spain.
3. Teodoro Hernandez's one-off zine where he relates a few stories where he got called fascist.

NUTS!

Like its name suggest, Nuts! *is out there. It's a big-ass tabloid format makes it feel like a time-warp, like a random lost & found item from a time when print was the only way and* Slash *or* Search & Destroy *were kings. But unlike these venerable publications whose main concerns seemed to be informing the people,* Nuts! *doesn't seem to give a fuck. In true "medium is the message" fashion, Ben Trogdon fills up his pages with such content that one can't help scratching their head wondering why or what the fuck this thing is, which in turn opens up the possibilities of what a punk fanzine is or should be. From giant psychedelic posters drawn by the mentally ill to interviews with sex workers or every band that matters in the cities of Olympia and NYC, the only motive seems to be passion, the love of the music, of the art, of the people. Meeting Ben is an experience in itself, and when he came to Lyon last year for his first photo exhibition, chatting with him about our respective cities, the history of his zine, and our mutual love for Felix von Havoc's columns made me even more curious and prompted this interview.*

Introduction and interview by Alex Simon with the help of Grace Ambrose. Photos provided by Ben, art sourced from back issues of Nuts!.

MRR: Last time we met, you mentioned that *Nuts!* was a longer-running zine than I thought and that you started it when you were "living on the road," before your move to Olympia. Could you tell us about that period? Were you some kind of bum?

I actually started doing *Nuts!* as a photocopy punk zine in high school when I was sixteen in Arnold, Maryland, in 2001. It was an 8.5 x 11" photocopied, folded kinda thing. But my first ever zine was a webzine I made in eighth grade called *Pure Nastyness*. Then I did SmallPunk.com with my best friend, and we interviewed Reel Big Fish, Dillinger Four, and lots more. As I got more into DIY and politics I decided that the internet was not something I wanted to spend my time on and started *Nuts!* as a print zine. I interviewed This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb and the Bananas when I was in high school. I made these little written out forms, and they just filled in answers and I photocopied 'em and put it in my zine. But yes, I traveled all the time from eighteen kinda 'til twenty five, pretty much. [I was] based in Olympia. But I lived in a crawl space, then a van, a kitchen pantry, and an RV for a while, so my rent was always pretty cheap. My rooms were always just a bunch of cassette tapes all over the ground and then stacks and stacks of issues of *Nuts!* that I rested my beer cans and coffee cups on top of.

MRR: What was the content of these early issues like and how many copies did you usually print? Did you sell it? Trade it? Give it for free to whoever cared?

It's pretty much been about punk music since the very beginning. In high school I sold it for ten cents a copy and made like twenty five or something. I did it once a month for a while. There was a period of time from 2004–2006 when I decided music was dead. During that time, *Nuts!* was just my weird drawings, stories, and collages. Weird art, freaky as hell and very dorky. Drawings of half-men, half-elves ringing doorbells and stuff like that. In the early years of *Nuts!*, being on newsprint in Olympia, I would go to shows and stand outside and desperately try to sell them to the people smoking. Printing on newsprint is kind of expensive, and I was always broke from doing it! Living in a small town, I sold it to the same people over and over again, and everyone kind of got sick of me, so eventually I stopped harassing everyone!

MRR: What attracted you to Olympia? What were you looking for? Did you find it?

This is a long story involving love, and, sorry, I'm not going to tell you all the whole thing

MRR: Explain the role that Sex Vid played in the "second phase" of *Nuts!*

They are the reason I started printing on newsprint! This band was so important to me. They are the reason I decided music wasn't dead anymore. I thought everyone needed to hear this new wave of Olympia punk. Sex Vid got all these great bands to come play Olympia and opened my mind to this new world of what it meant to be into underground extreme expression. I owe it all to them. (Thanks Judd, RJ, Sue, and Sam!)

MRR: The other day I saw someone describe a *Nuts!* release party as "Olympia's Woodstock." I've heard about Son Skull playing in the pouring rain from people all over the US for years. When did you start doing release parties?

It was my friend Dan Swire's idea to do a party for the release of the fanzine. It seemed like a good way to celebrate everyone who worked hard on the zine, hang out, party, and listen to music and stuff. I think we started doing them at issue four or five? I've tried to always have it in all-ages spaces and have some amount of free beer and pizza. I booked a big show with a bunch of bands in a burnt-out building in downtown Olympia. There was no roof during the last couple bands

were you looking for? Did you find it?
This is a long story involving love, and, sorry, I'm not going to tell you all the whole thing in these pages. I moved to Olympia from Washington DC. I'm originally from Seattle and most of my family still lives there, so that was kind of a reason. I was looking for other like-minded people living outside of society's shit.

a big show with a bunch of bands in a burnt-out building in downtown Olympia. There was no roof, and during the last couple bands we had to hold a tarp over 'em so the gear wouldn't get ruined! (Thanks Chaske!) It was pretty incredible. Some friends and I volunteered for months to get this dude to let us use his building, and the whole event was run completely by audience members. It was so awesome and inspiring. Most every band that was featured in *Nuts!* (up to that point) played. Damn, that was wild. Def like Woodstock, I think. I'd like to do something like that in New York.

But yes, every *Nuts!* party has been pretty crazy in its own way. Usually I'm celebrating pretty hard myself cuz I was working so hard on the zine up until that point, so sometimes the details of each event get a little hazy! Ha! The Olympia Public Library asked me to throw a party there! That was crazy! There were hundreds of people at this free punk show in the library. Hysterics and Broken Water played. I did another outdoor show in a pizzeria parking lot, dance parties at a record store in Brooklyn, a punk show at this art book store in Manhattan.

MRR: Why did you move from Olympia to NYC? Had something changed in Olympia?
Most of my friends moved away from Olympia to LA, the Bay Area, and elsewhere. I've always loved New York. I've visited a lot over the course of years and always wanted to spend more time here. One of my best friends moved here, and I followed her. She set me up with a place to stay (thanks Lauren!). Originally, I thought I was staying for a couple months, but it's been over three years now!

MRR: I think what strikes most people at first about *Nuts!* is how BIG it is. Where did the idea to have it tabloid-sized and newsprint come from? Is bigger always better? Do you get a lot of people complaining that they can't read it in the subway or in the backseat of a car?
I wanted to do it big 'cuz everything was getting smaller and smaller on cell phones and computer screens. People were reading about punk on these tiny message boards and there was never any cool pictures of bands or anything. Also I thought *Nuts!* should be like my heroes *Slash, Search and Destroy, Punk,* and *No Mag*. Huge pix! Great interviews! Freaky stuff! But yeah, if it's too big, you're a square.

MRR: How do you lay out the zine? Is it a mix of digitally and cut and paste? Will you ever change the format?
I lay every issue out cut and paste style at this one photocopy store in Astor Place, NYC. It takes a lot of hours and a lot of cups of coffee. I do final touches on photoshop at colleges that have nice computers (thanks Cecilia and Shiva!). It's printed in Long Island City, Queens. I will probably change the format at some point. I hope so. *Nuts!* has changed a lot in the fourteen years I've been doing it, and I'm sure it will keep changing.

What advice would you give to some young person about to start a zine in 2015?
Send me a copy! Write the craziest shit you can think of!

MRR: How's life in NYC? What other zines and media are being made there that we should know about?
New York is great. I eat amazing food all the time, and I meet people from all different parts of the globe constantly. I see wild and different bands from all over the world every night of the week! A lot of amazing people, bands, and artists live in New York, and I've made some amazing friendships here that I'm sure will last a lifetime. Cool New York art things to check are Papertown Company, Never Sit, Frozen Dirt, Dripper World, Street Fever, Better Read Than Dead, Death Traitors, and Ignore Rock 'N' Roll Heroes.

MRR: I'd like to talk about the Gas Rag interview you recently published. For those who didn't read it, it's about the life of their singer as a sex worker. I thought it was a great read, but for the sake of argument, I'd say it also participates in some kind of fascination with the bizarre, the sensationalist, that's pretty much everywhere these days in all kinds of media, especially online ane in punk, but everywhere, too. What do you say to that?

I guess that's true, but in my mind I was just tapping in the tradition of punks being sex workers. All the original New York punks turned tricks. Over the years, I've had a lot of friends that do sex work to pay the rent. It's a part of punk, and I wanted to represent that and make it real. Not like some freaky side show no one talks about. It's real life out there, ya know?

MRR: Besides running *Nuts!*, you also take pictures. How and when did that start? Was it because you needed band pictures for the zine? Where can someone see your pictures?

I started taking pictures in 2007 when I found a crappy plastic camera on the street in Olympia. But yes, I needed pix for the zine, and no one in the punk scene in Olympia at the time was taking any. So I started obsessively taking pictures of all the bands and doing photo shoots and stuff. I found that I had a lot of fun being a photographer and started taking pictures of my friends, family, and the daily beauty I'm surrounded by. I have a website where I try to post a new picture every week. It's vbdbct.tumblr.com. I also am working on a book of my ten years of taking pictures. I want to call it *ROCK'N'ROLL FOREVER*, and hopefully it will be out in late 2016 or early 2017. It's a lot of work putting this book together! I have thousands of negatives, and a lot of them are still in a moldy garage in Olympia.

MRR: How many issues of *Nuts!* have there been? What's your favorite content you've published?

There have been eighteen issues of *Nuts!* that have been printed on newsprint. But previous to that there were so many. For a couple years I did a photocopy issue of *Nuts!* a week! So I don't really know. Hundreds? Favorite content? Not sure. I loved interviewing the Spits because I've been a big fan of theirs since high school. The Sex Vid interview I did was probably the first time I felt like an interview I did was something special. The Dawn of Humans interview had a magic feeling. I got stung in the eye by a bee during the Milk Music interview, and that whole night felt really weird. In the most recent issue of *Nuts!* the Mommy interview is pretty incredible. Mike from Mommy has had such a crazy life. People have submitted a lot of amazing art and writing, and I'm proud of everything that has been printed in *Nuts!*

MRR: How do you decide who to ask to participate in an issue of *Nuts*? It always feels like a glimpse into a group of friends.

Yes, there are regulars. But it's pretty much people who inspire me and hopefully *Nuts!* inspires them too. I've never really asked anyone who I didn't personally know to be a part of the fanzine. I've for sure interviewed bands I'm not friends with, but other than that, it's all friends and people who I have a personal connection to.

MRR: How many copies of the zine do you print today, and how do you sell it? Do people read it a lot in NYC? Did they in Olympia?

I print 1000 copies of every issue. I mostly sell it to distributors and they sell it to people. I have a hard time with mail order or selling things on the internet. It gives me a lot of strange anxiety. I'm thankful that people can buy *Nuts!* on the net easily through other distros. (feelitrecords.bigcartel.com, thanks Sam!) I think people read it? I don't know. If they don't read it, they don't tell me.

MRR: When are you gonna quit?

NEVER.

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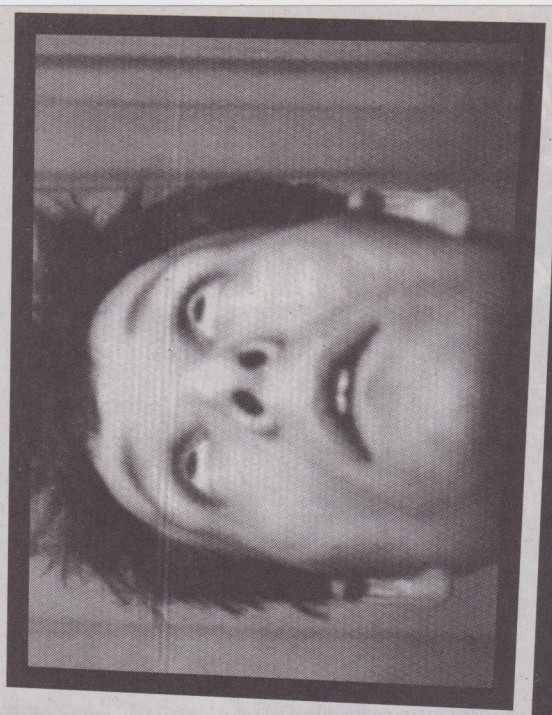


Its publication has been quite sporadic, but *Burn Collector* remains one the longest running personal zines still in print. Known for being one of the most interesting underground writers, Al Burian writes for publications like *Punk Planet* and *Full Moon*, but he is also known for playing in numerous bands, including Hellbender, Milemarker, Challenger, Canadian Rifle, and, more recently, Big Eater. He generously took the time to answer all my questions concerning the motivations behind continuing his work with both his zine, his new bands, columns, and readings, and how he came to live in Europe five years ago.

Interview by Steph Rad Party. Photos courtesy of Al Burian.

MRR: Even if your zine doesn't come out on a very regular basis, *Burn Collector* is one of the very few personal zines that has been circulating for more than two decades. When exactly did you start printing your zine? Did you make some other zines before *Burn Collector*, or was it your first attempt at making a zine? Were you expecting to still be doing zines twenty years later, and what makes you still want to do it this way?

I made the first one around the end of 1994, so, yeah, it has been twenty years. Yikes! I never thought about it in a long term way at all. When I started making zines, it was a fairly standard way to communicate within the subculture. I just kept on going with it. Before *Burn Collector* I did various one-shot zines. When I was in the band Hellbender we put out a band zine called *Foodbox*, which we all contributed to.

My reasons for sticking with it and continuing the zine have changed over the years, but in general it is nice to have a feeling of long-term continuity, and it is nice to have a solo project, a thing that you can do whenever you want to and where you don't need to rely on anyone else to do it.

MRR: What made you want to try to do a zine and write personal stories in the beginning? Were there other zines that were a big influence on you?

The idea for making zines came from touring. I started traveling around the US in the early '90s, before the internet was really happening, so you'd play a house show in Montana or Alabama and that was it, that was the only chance you would probably ever have to run into those twenty or thirty people. The zine was a sort of brochure, something to give to people that would maybe connect in a different way than the band could. And I did make a lot of connections this way. I made tons of friends, got a lot of correspondence going.

The writing was just spontaneous, automatic writing. It was just there to fill up space, to express some personality. I enjoyed and emulated writers like Kurt Vonnegut and Douglas Adams. Henry Miller's *Tropic of Cancer* was the first book I read after I graduated college and that really influenced my life trajectory in a lot of (good and bad) ways. *Cometbus* was the first zine I read where I picked up on a serial narrative continuity with a protagonist whom you could easily identify with. This quality reminded me of comics, which also often have that serial storytelling quality—to me, *Cometbus* was like, aha, it's an all-words comic book.

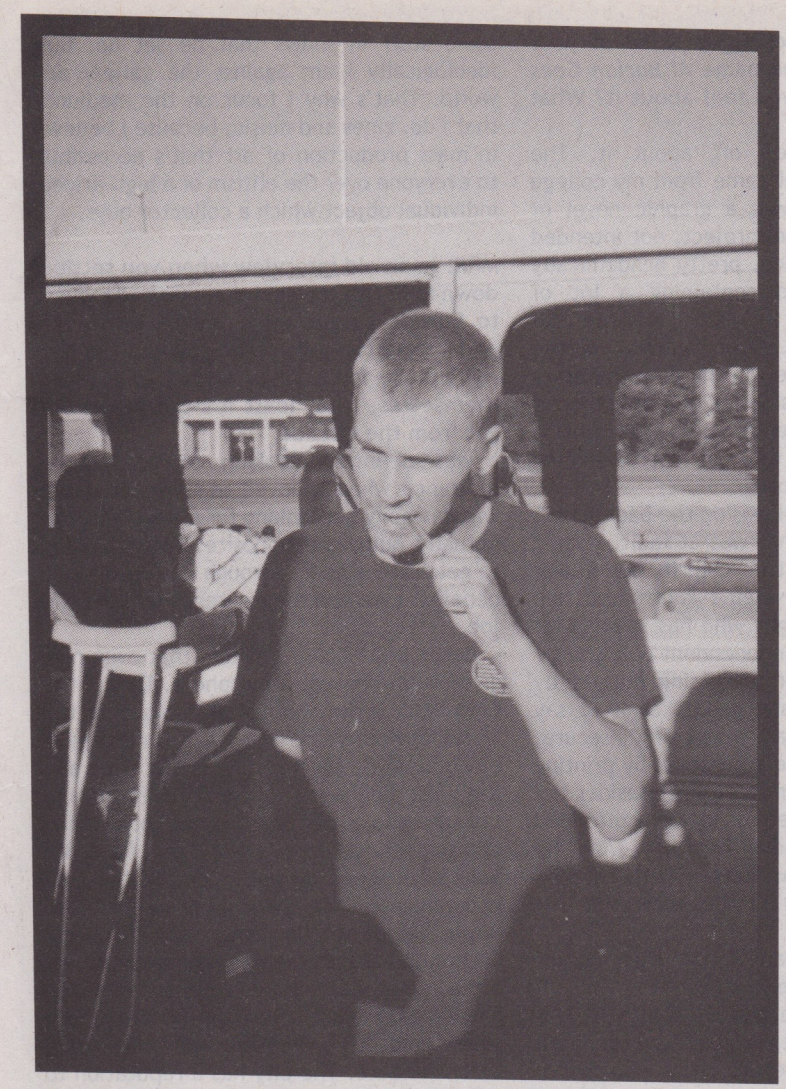
MRR: How many copies of your zine were you printing when you started it, and how many do you print now?

The first ten issues were photocopied, and I worked in copy shops during the time, so the print runs were, uh, pretty high. I never kept track of the numbers. But it was in the time when I began touring a lot with bands, so I could get them out there easily. I'd bring boxes full of zines with me, and when I came home I would run off more. The more recent printed ones (#11-16) have had varying runs from a thousand to a few thousand.

MRR: It may sound like a silly question, or at least a question a lot of people may have already asked you, but where does the name Burn Collector comes from?

The origin of the name is described on the last page of the first issue:

> *"New York is brimming with strange looking individuals, and all the more so because the plethora of personas facilitates a sort of one-upmanship to occur where the only way to stand out from the masses is to look that much crazier, and so on and so on, building up like an arms race, until finally the net total of berserk looking outfits in Manhattan alone is enough to destroy the world eight times over. You see all these people all day, but you never get to talk to them, you never have an entry into their conversation, and it makes you feel that much more anonymous and hopeless in regards to your relation to that gigantic horde of humanity, an infinitesimally tiny fraction of whose numbers and addresses I carry on my back with me, pack-rat style, brainless. This is the essential burn of New York City, I ventured, sitting there explaining the variety and shades and many textures of the many burns I had been feeling in the*



past few weeks. 'You really like to just kind of go around checking out the burns of various places, don't you?' said Elizabeth. 'You're kind of a burn collector.' I thought that was pretty funny."

MRR: It's been quite a long time since the latest issue of Burn Collector came out. Is there a new one in the works, or is the zine on hiatus to benefit some other projects?

Even though I praised long-term continuity earlier, there is a dark side to it, too. You grow to hate the confines you create for yourself. If you have consistency in your life, you secretly dream of its destruction. I constantly imagine quantum parallel universes where I quit doing the zine long ago and branched off into some wild unimagined direction—investigative TV journalist, philosophy PhD, astronaut training, whatever. Every time I finish an issue of *Burn Collector* I'm burnt out on it and I think "OK, cool, that's it, I can quit doing that now. I can get on to other projects." But then, some time later, the germ of a new idea will get into my head; there is a theme or experience that seems like it could be well expressed in the zine format. I do have the germ of a theme for #17, but we'll see if I manifest the willpower to go through with the execution.

MRR: If my memory serves me well, Burn Collector #16 came out a few years ago as a very limited print of 30 or 60 copies for a zine event in Berlin and was later reissued by Pegacorn Press on a larger scale. Prior to that, you mentioned on your blog that you made a deal with Microcosm publishing to rely on them to publish your two previous issues. What made you change for this issue?

I guess the idea of doing zines with a publisher feels somewhat disproportionate to the thing itself. In November 2011, the first Berlin Zine Fest was organized, and I wanted to participate, but I didn't have anything new out. I was bummed about it, but then I had this moment of illumination where I thought, wait a minute, it's just a zine, I can print four or four thousand, it doesn't matter. It doesn't affect the world much either way. So I threw together a provisional version of BC#16, just to have something new to table with at the zine fest.

I had met Caroline Paquita shortly before that, when she was on tour with Forgetters, and I gave her a copy. She suggested putting out a US version through her press, and that seemed like a nice idea to me. Risograph printing is a good compromise between a more polished, offset-printed style, and the kind of unique scrappiness of silkscreen or photocopies. It maintains a bit more of a handmade quality.

MRR: Apart from your zine, you've also put out several collections of your work through several publishers, and more recently a book in German called *Sämtliche Niederlagen*. Can you tell us a little about it?

Sämtliche Niederlagen is a novel whose contents are more or less a re-write of *Burn Collector* #8 and #11. The stories in those two zines have a lot of overlapping characters, and they were the two most "novelistic" pieces of writing that I've done. So compiling them into a single book made sense, and putting together a manuscript (in English) was easy enough. The translation itself was a more arduous task.

MRR: Did you have a contract with a publisher to put out the book before working on it?

I had a contract with a German publisher and a translator lined up. The whole project should have been much easier than it was. Maybe I got too involved in it. I spent a year arguing about phrases like "my money tape"—is it really the same thing as "my favorite tape"? To me it is more like: your most reliable tape, the one that always comes through for you, something as consistent as the value of currency. It is just a small gradient of difference in meaning, but is there really no correlative in the

German language to express this gradient? I drove the translator to the brink of madness with my refusal to be placated on about 100,000 of these sorts of small points. The book came out really well in the end, but the process was pretty damn difficult.

MRR: Have you done some readings to promote it? Is it an exercise you're familiar with from promoting your zine or your previous books?
I did quite a few readings in Germany last year. I haven't done any in Switzerland or Austria, which would be the other German speaking countries I could go to. In the summer I will visit the USA and (thank god) do some readings in English.

I've been doing readings since 2000 when the *Burn Collector 1-9* book originally came out. I like doing them, though as a performer I think I'm pretty hit or miss. Sometimes my readings are pretty good and sometimes they really derail. I don't rehearse, and I don't usually even plan what I'm going to read much in advance, because otherwise you lose spontaneity and it feels like a comedy routine. I do like to make people laugh, though. Getting an audience to crack up is one of the biggest on-stage thrills I've experienced.

MRR: You're also writing for a Czech music magazine called *Full Moon*. Do you do it on a regular basis? Did you approach them, or did they know your zine and your books and asked you to write some stuff for them because they liked what you were doing?
Writing for *Full Moon* happened because I met the editor at an Auxes/Challenger show in Brno and we hit it off. It was fun to write for *Full Moon* because my columns and articles were translated into Czech, so when I would see it in print I wasn't able to read what I had written. That was very liberating. You got the victory feeling of publication without the negative aspects, like realizing how you could have formulated something better, or getting mad about the editing, etc. I felt free to go off in all kinds of weird directions, but I guess eventually it got too weird for them, and they very politely stopped asking me for stuff.

MRR: Is there any chance to see some of your columns from *Punk Planet* collected as a book or zine?
I've thought about putting together a book of columns and incidental writing. As of yet, I haven't quite figured out a structure or overarching theme that would make sense as a book collection. But the idea is on the list for possible future projects.

Punk Planet was a cool magazine, there were some really talented people involved. It's inspiring to see my fellow columnists from those days, like Jessica Hopper, Anne Elizabeth Moore, or Sam McPheeters progressing with their writing and producing some really great books and journalistic work.

MRR: Someone bootlegged some of your old strips under the name *Al Burian Goes to Hell*. How did you feel about it? What was your reaction?
I was really pissed off about it. The bootlegged material came from my college art thesis, which was a graphic novel of sorts. It was a school project, not intended for a larger audience, pretty academically self-referential and containing a lot of crudely expressed hostility towards the institution I was in. After I graduated, the thesis sat on the shelf in the college library with everyone else's until a certain someone stole it from the shelves and began printing and distributing it with an altered ending and incorrect page order.

The Migraine label was on the back, but it wasn't Ian Lynam that was at fault. I don't need to name the true culprit, but it was very disappointing when I confronted him about it— this is a guy who has spent a lot of time involved in independent publishing— and he blew me off, excusing himself by saying "But it's really good!" as if to say the problem was that I was being insecure, and he was doing me a big favor by printing the comics without my consent. Besides the financial rip-off aspect of it, I was offended by that condescending attitude. And he didn't change his position until I threatened to sue him. So much for punk rock ethics.

MRR: Didn't you want to do a bootleg of the bootleg to make it legitimate?
If I had been approached about the project and agreed to do it, I could have done an edited and revised version that I would have felt better about putting out. But I didn't really have the intention of releasing it in the first place, and as it is, I don't feel the need to do an "official" version just to remedy the damage. I just try to not think about it and hope that there are not copies still floating around.

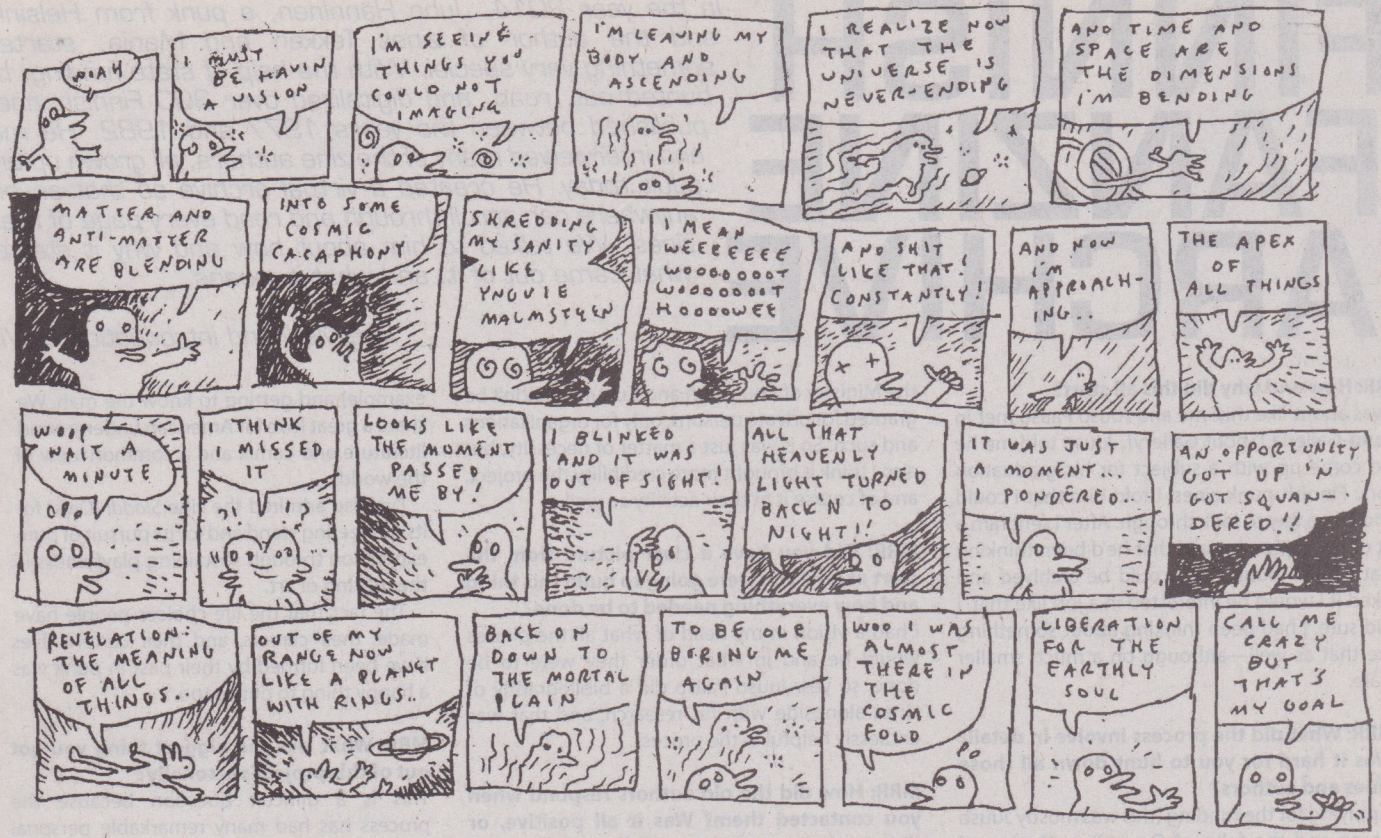
MRR: I saw a painting you did of Pig Champion—have you done some other paintings of emblematic people you like, or was it just a one shot? Have you ever received any propositions to do some exhibitions of your drawings or paintings?
That painting was more or less a one-shot. I liked the image. You don't find many pictures of Pig Champion where he looks happy.

In general, I really enjoy painting, but it is more of a process-oriented thing for me, like knitting or something. In fact, for me a big part of the appeal of painting is the pointlessness. When I do other creative stuff, like write or make music, there is always the idea of eventually presenting it to an audience. The painting is just for my own benefit; it is relaxing and therapeutic, the intention is just to have fun and fill my apartment walls. I have been in a few group art shows. When I was living in Chicago, Ed Marszewski from *Lumpen* magazine was very supportive of my visual art, and I exhibited some stuff in shows that he set up. But ideologically I am against the gallery art world. That's why I focus on the mediums that I do, zines and music, because I believe in mass production of art that's accessible to everyone over the elitism of a high-priced individual object which a collector buys.

MRR: In an old interview when you settled down in Berlin you said that you had moved to Europe to get some health insurance and a state run job. Berlin seems to be the right place for a lot of artists to express themselves, or at least it's the image we get from the outside.
I was definitely looking to get health insurance when I moved to Germany. But I was certainly not looking for a state run job. Actually quite the opposite: I was looking to get state support through unemployment benefits. I wanted the insurance without the job.

Berlin has a bizarre history that even now gives it an unusual atmosphere. During the Cold War, Berlin was totally unique in the world, obviously; the east side was the capital city of a newly erected communist state and the west side was a place for weirdos and dissenters to go because you got out of doing military service if you lived there. The '80s punk rock scene on both sides of the wall is legendary. Then there's the whole David Bowie Berlin, techno-anarchist '90s party Berlin, and '20s Berlin was probably craziest of all, a hotbed of queer culture and dance parties that make even the post-wall era seem tame. It's a unique place in Germany, that's for sure. The city has a reputation to uphold. I like that sense of history— it makes it easy to continually feel like a newcomer. Even after living here for half a decade, I still feel like I've just arrived. There is always someone around to go "What? Only five years? I've been here since 1976, man!!"

MRR: In a recent interview you also said that you were playing with your mother on a kind of family folk old-time type thing, with her playing violin and you playing guitar. Do you still do it, and do you play often? Is it in bars or small venues? How has it started? Isn't it a bit strange to play with someone as close as your mother?
My mom and I have always had a contentious relationship as far as music goes. She played the viola as a classical musician in touring orchestras in the '60s and '70s, whereas I spent a lot of time as a touring musician in the '90s and '00s playing music that seems like incomprehensible noise to her. In some ways we have a similar history, and in some ways we have had diametrically opposite life experiences. So finding common ground was tricky. The folk traditionals are sort of neutral territory, something neither of us has much knowledge about or personal attachment to. We don't play out that often, but we've played at the Schokoladen, a punk venue in the neighborhood, Bis Aufs Messer



record store, and a few small house show type events. I think it is usually stranger for the audience than it is for me. Getting along with your parents might be the last taboo of punk.

MRR: In general, how do your parents react to the choices you made to live a not so standard life? Are they supportive of what you do and the bands you play in? Do they read your books and zines?

With my mom, the issue between us is more about quality than overall legitimacy. She might ask "Why is your new record so terrible?" but it is not about whether the touring musician lifestyle is good for your health, whether the projects you're working on have a financial future, or any of the more typical parental conflicts you might have. She's very supportive about all the writing stuff I do as well. I think my mom gets the paradigm; she's familiar with the starving artist type. My dad is a retired college professor, his adult working life was much more stable and secure than mine, so I think when he imagines my existence it seems crazily precarious.

MRR: Apart from the folk project with your mother, you're also playing in a band called Big Eater. It's the first time that I've seen you only singing without holding a guitar or a bass, like in your previous bands. Was it something you wanted to do for a long time, or did it just happen this way?

The "just singing" era of Big Eater is over, unfortunately. It was fun while it lasted. I never harbored the ambition to be the singer of a band, but I knew Rob (Big Eater bass player) from the Schokoladen, and he asked me if I wanted to try out singing for a project he was putting together. I had actually made up my mind to quit playing music when I moved to Berlin. But then I thought, OK, just singing, that means only responsible for the lyrics, maybe that doesn't really count as playing music, I can sort of put that in the "writing/performance" category. We started practicing, and it was really fun. I realized how much I missed the consistency and social aspect of having a weekly band practice. It's like an anchor for your life. That was what got me back into playing music.

We started playing out in 2012, but our guitarist quit in summer 2013. We tried out some other guitarists, but he was a pretty unique guy, so it wasn't really possible to find a replacement. I ended up taking up playing guitar in the band out of desperation. Now we've added a keyboard/saxophone player, Lena, and we have been making progress. We recorded new songs and played some shows again this summer.

MRR: I was a bit surprised listening to the demo you put on the web, it's very different from the bands you used to play in the past like Milemarker, Challenger, or even Hellbender. You wanted to try something different?

I had limited influence on the musical direction, which is the curse and the blessing of being the singer. There is some weird music on that demo, a lot of jazz and some psychedelic influence. Much of that weirdness comes from Timo's guitar playing. It really divided people; some thought he was amazing and some thought he was too noodley and spaced out. I appreciated the divisive quality he would bring to it. To me, that's punk: freedom to do the unexpected.

MRR: Do you have any other band projects in the works?

If you don't like Big Eater, you should check out Ether Hawk, a band I was in when I still lived in Chicago. The guitarist is Dallas Thomas from Asschapel (now playing in Pelican), the drummer Mikey was in Planes Mistaken for Stars, and Tim Remis from Sweet Cobra sang on it as well. I sang and played bass. If Big Eater is the most easy-listening band I have been in, Ether Hawk is by contrast the heaviest. We did a five-song recording, but it was never released until now. The label Protagonist Music is putting it out sometime in the next few months. I also played guitar on a recent Canadian Rifle 7" which they recorded in Berlin. I think that is coming out on Dirt Cult records.

Milemarker resurfaces occasionally. We have been putting together a live set recently with some new members and will play some shows in Germany this summer. Dave has always been a great friend and is a great person to play music with. We have quite a few new songs written, so at some point we may record another LP. No plans beyond that.

FINNISH FANZINE ARCHIVE

In the year 2014, Juho Hänninen, a punk from Helsinki and the author of zines Tekken *and* Mania, *started something very special. With the help of state funding, he hunted out, read, and digitalized over 300 Finnish zines published between the years 1977 and 1982. He met and interviewed many of the zine authors, all grown up and adult today. He created a virtual archive so that anyone anywhere can scroll through and read every page of these zines. We talked to him about how and why it started, what came out of it, and what it means.*

Interview and introduction by Vilja.

MRR: How and why did this all start?
It was about like this: me and Juuso Paaso met in Huuto-Galleria [Shout Gallery]. Juuso told me he had come up with a subject for his graduation work: Finnish punk zines. I told him that I could lend him a few to look through. After I sent him a list of my copies, he said that he'd been thinking that Finnish punk zines could be archived and asked if I would be interested in a job like that. I said sure, I had been thinking about something like that as well—although on a much smaller scale.

MRR: What did the process involve in detail? Was it hard for you to hunt down all those zines and authors?
Applying for the funding (this was mostly Juuso Paaso and the folks of Oranssi), gathering of the zines, scanning them, getting permits for publication from the authors, putting up the website, and making interviews. The zines were easy to borrow once we got to it. Hunting down the authors was difficult and for me it was hell. Just the amount [hundreds and hundreds] of authors seemed overwhelming at first.

MRR: What is Oranssi Ry and what was their role in this?
Oranssi Ry is an organization supporting independent and self-motivated activity (for the youth, mostly) located in Suvilahti, Helsinki. They offer space and opportunities for doing all kinds of stuff. They joined the project when we found out that the funding from the Ministry of Education and Culture couldn't be granted for private persons: only for organizations and such. So it was just a matter of necessity, but also I think it brought more credibility the project, and of course it fit their activity so well.

MRR: Did you have a clear picture from the start of how you were going to build this thing and how everything needed to be done?
I had a vision in my head of what all the phases would be and in what order they were to be done, so yes. Juuso Paaso did a bibliography of zines alongside with his research, and that was endlessly helpful in the process.

MRR: How did the old authors respond when you contacted them? Was it all positive, or did you encounter some problems? I imagine interviewing them was very interesting. Did you find out anything special or surprising?
They were happily surprised. There were a few nutcases, though, and some of the authors didn't want their teenage stuff to be re-published. I can't really specify any super great or surprising details, but the underground knowledge of Pekka Haavisto [*Ed.: an openly gay Finnish democrat politician who nearly won the presidential election*] was impressive, as well as the punk background of some other Finnish public figures, too. Maybe the volume of the zine phenomenon was the biggest thing for me? There really were over 900 issues released in just five years of time.

MRR: Can you describe some common features among the zines in that period? Did they share a lot of common subjects or manners? Was there a network between the zine makers? A lot of people reading this have lived mainly during the internet time, and a network or even a community between people based on pen and paper only sounds pretty far away.
Yeah, they were connected, and there were even some meetings. Common features could be found in the subjects covered, the ways of doing, attitude, etc., but something that would connect/cover all of them is hard to find. I think, though, that they all felt like a part of the margin, and this helped overcome differences of opinion, the feeling of being in the same boat.

MRR: What were the coolest things you found going through all the material? Did some of the zines, issues, or authors pop out as your personal favourites?
Probably the coolest thing was discovering the *Ketkuta* and *Jytää* zines from recent years by Matti Saine (from Kauneus and Terveys, King James and the Idiots, and the zine *Nakit Muusilla,* for example) and getting to know the man. We share a great love for American underground literature and comix and a common view of the world.

I've also admired the zine *Sladdi* [Dick] for its pioneering stand and for its pursuit of pure expression through sustaining playfulness in the making of art.

The fact that the life choices people have made, their careers, and their current lives have been formed by their past in punk was a happy thing to notice too.

MRR: What was the biggest thing you got out of this project personally?
This is a difficult question because the process has had many remarkable personal meanings.
1) I decided that for a year I would write *Tekken* like I was going to school, learning something new all the time. I had clear goals for those "school years," for everything I wanted to do. Six hours of "studying" every day. Because of my experiences from University, where despite a high quality of education, you might not feel like you are learning anything, I concluded that official vocational schools wouldn't be any better. Studying the field of media, you're gonna end up doing commercials for supermarkets. So I thought it's better to learn for myself and make my own contacts.
2) I've had an obsession with doing something meaningful, validly credited and blah blah so on—something "real," but also something that's my "own"—before going back to University. I guess I was afraid that the University would eat up too big a chunk of my identity. So there was also this "FUCK SCHOOL" idea there.
3) Looking at the poor state of the punk scene in Helsinki for a couple of years, it was nice for a young idealist like me to see that there are still 50-year-olds who believe in their cause and are not just cynical drunks.

MRR: After finishing the archive, you held an exhibition on it in Helsinki, and you've travelled to Beirut to talk about it. What all has followed from the project? Is there still more to expect?
We got 16,000 more euros from OKM to continue the project! So we will get all of the zines! Yay!

MRR: Where does the figure of 900 zines come from? What is OKM?
The number 900 comes from the bibliography Juuso Paaso made, and it covers zines labeled somewhat "punk" from 1977-1982 and even some from earlier. Punk or punk zine wasn't

clearly defined in the project, so if a zine was made in a punk way, was about punk, or was otherwise fitting [also in an academic sense], we would take it in the archive. OKM is the Ministry of Education and Culture, one of the biggest funders of Finnish culture.

MRR: The project got a lot of attention in the Finnish mainstream media. Did you expect that? How did it feel having a picture of your face in the biggest newspaper in Finland?
None of us knew to expect the media craze we were to live with. The picture made me laugh, but also the whole thing felt terrible, the fact that they made a public issue of me getting a job. When they made the article in *Helsingin Sanomat* [*Ed.: the biggest newspaper is Finland*] I had been up all night because a band [Räjäyttäjät] was staying at my place, so I was really anxious. I didn't like talking about the project, like I don't like talking about any of my projects to anyone, and all of the questions felt understandable but still awkward. I thought about rejecting the interview but felt like some publicity was important for the project.

I'm wearing just boxers in the picture, and my mom still says that no one notices it, that it looks like I'm wearing shorts. The whole thing changed my relationship to publicity and to myself.

MRR: You also have been doing zines. *Tekken* has been a personal favorite of mine, and I'm not the only one. I think you said somewhere that before starting out, you hadn't read that many zines and weren't so familiar with the phenomenon, but your zines still resemble more the personal and outside-the-box touch more common to the zines around the turn of the '80s than the unified band interview / record review / tour report style of modern punk zines. Were you trying to stand out, or was it just obvious it came out the way it did?
I think this would need another interview completely—it's difficult to answer shortly. But I also find the resemblance to the "first wave" of zines delightful. You could say it was intentional: I was trying to avoid formality and trying to create text that was genuinely interesting. But first of all, everything in *Tekken* came out naturally and easily, laughing while hitting the keyboards.

MRR: What do you feel about the situation of zines today in Finland and around the world? Do you keep a close eye on what happens?
I don't follow zines, but when I started *Tekken,* I had the thought that zines are going to make a return. It's about just a reaction / counter-reaction, cool / not cool way of perceiving history and the world: if something has been on the offside for long, it's gonna come back up, and if something has been in the front for too long, it's bound to be forgotten at some point...So I am expecting zines to make a comeback at the moment.

MRR: You're also active in the underground scene in other ways. You've played in bands and published a lot of tapes through Fuck CDs. How important of a role do you feel zines still have today?
I see it that zines are no longer a primary source of information but can provide a deeper insight. They've changed like magazines. Their role as a part of the subculture has changed, but about their importance, it's difficult to say: zines are no more the main network for the underground or its communication, so that diminishes their importance, of course.

MRR: Do you plan to continue doing research on the history of the underground?
I have had to think about this lately. After the archive job, I was so fed up about anything marginal culture that I felt like selling all my records and going to work in a kindergarten or something. Go build props for the theater.

I'm going to study history at university and plan to do my thesis about newspapers made by Finnish migrants in the US in the beginning of 1900s or about the social welfare system on unemployment in Finland, its role in the society, and the changes in it. But probably I'll write something to keep my brain active, articles about punk lyrics for the student magazine, or something like that. And looks like I'm continuing my career as a zinemaker as well, so....

View zines and learn more about the archive at oranssi.net. The archive is actively looking for people to continue work on this project. The exhibition has been a huge success, traveling to Oranssi, the Helsinki Comics Festival, the World of Tango Festival in Tampere, the first international zine festival of Lebanon in Beirut, and the Sysmä (a very small place in central Finland) library. It will go on to Oulu and London. Also, the zine archive was elected as the "Archiving Act of The Year!"

PICKS FROM THE ARCHIVE

SLADDI: A forerunner on a global scale, *Sladdi* (which translates to "Dick") was a comic book running for seven issues from 1977 to 1983. *Sladdi* was not as much punk as just plain alternative, a comic book with heavy influences from the 1960's underground as well as the psychedelic movement. You can find Gaye Advert on the pages as well as Finnish punk icons. Made by a bunch of weirdos.

PUIKKO: A teenage lifestyle magazine. *Puikko* (which translates to "Stick") was a classic fanzine with plenty of adolescent humor, band interviews about the zinesters' own bands, and Space Invaders. *Puikko*, I salute you.

FANI: The most active fanzine, *Fani*'s name means literally "fan." *Fani* is impressively sincere. Made once every two weeks by almost the only girl in the scene, Anneli Nygren. Anneli is still making her own photocopied zines!

HURMA: An almost professional magazine, it was the second biggest in print after the grandfather of Finnish punk fanzines, *Hilse*. *Hurma* translates to "charm."

JOUKKOHAUTA: *Joukkohauta* is one of the first anarcho-political fanzines made by no other than Jari Kauppinen, who later on got a PhD in philosophy. Kauppinen was in direct contact with *Hilse* maker Miettinen and even made a parody exposé magazine about "Hilse Enterprises."

LAAMA: With a lifecycle of over seven years, *Laama* documents the transformation from punk to hardcore. Anarcho influenced.

MAANALAINEN KAITAELOKUVA: Made by the most active zinester, Pasi Myllymäki from Iittala. Myllymäki wrote and drew hundreds of other pieces for other fanzines. *Maanalainen Kaitaelokuva* (translating to "underground film") continues the art moviemaker's expression rush. Myllymäki had a degree in graphic design, which means that *Maanalainen Kaitaelokuva* also includes some of the finest drawings in the fanzine scene.

NALLEPOSTI: Made by Nalle Virolainen, this is an underground comic book about BDSM teddy bears.

TITTIES & BEER: Coined from a Frank Zappa song "Titties & Beer," this zine rose from a small A7-sized, hand-written fanzine to a bigger, A4-sized magazine in its thirteen issues.

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NOT SHIT

100% whatever skate fanzine for cool girls and weird boys

I first met Chelsey when In School was on tour from NYC, and they played in a rad San Jose basement with her incredible band, Pig DNA. When I found out she not only skated, but put together an incredible fanzine about women in/and skateboarding it was clear she is the coolest. We had to interview her for the zine issue, no question! We met at Thrillhouse Records during Chelsey's shift to discuss the wretched reality and pleasures' of skateboarding using a female body and the epic reality that is Not Shit *zine. All this whilst playing broken down old arcade games and listening to Jerry's Kids and being interrupted by cool old locals with stories about their crazy soul 45s.*

Introduction by Layla Gibbon. Interview was conducted by Layla Gibbon, Grace Ambrose, and Ash Tray, who was visiting from London. All voices are blended in one ominous MRR questioner! Photos provided by Not Shit.

MRR: How old were you when you started skateboarding?
I started skateboarding maybe when I was twelve or thirteen, I think, not seriously at all, just for fun. I didn't learn any tricks or do anything "cool." I just skated around town.

MRR: That's still valid
Yeah...

MRR: I used to think it wasn't when I was a teenage skate rat. But now I understand that skate for fun or not at all is for real. When did you get serious?
I got more serious at skating kind of recently, like maybe a year or two ago? I stopped skating some point in my teenage years...I don't know why. Maybe this feeling of not thinking I could do it or something. Later on, as I was entering my mid-twenties, I suddenly thought, fuck this, why can I not skate? I always wanted to have fun and learn dumb tricks, but I just didn't think that was an option or something. Then I realized, duh, I should do whatever I want.

MRR: Did the zine come out of that? Wanting to skate and wanting to get serious about it?
It all was about the same time. It feels like when people start getting really into punk so they start bands without really knowing how to play their instruments. Then they just start doing it and making shit for themselves and shit that they want to see more of all at the same time. It feels like an outlet for something.

So, I guess my fantasy was for a skate zine to exist that had a lot of content and stuff to look at in the way a *Thrasher* or *Transworld* mag does. But unlike them there would be this punk framework with features and interviews with skaters who aren't at all like the ones you see in those mags. Sure, there are a ton of skate zines that exist, but even most of those are boys clubs or produced by self-involved misunderstood art guys.

MRR: Yeah there's that huge zine culture now that isn't really based on a punk ideal at all, that sort of LA Art Book Fair thing. It's definitely a skate culture thing, too. I was the consignment buyer at City Lights Books for a few years and kids would come in with these art zines that were like five pages long and want to sell them for $12. When I was a teenager, I did a skate zine. It started out in the early '90s via Riot Grrrl, but I skated, so I wrote a lot about that, being a female skater and hanging out with my friends and going to skate competitions and stuff. It was called *Chimps*. When I started skating, I remember all the girl skaters in videos and stuff were like doing weird freestyle/ballet moves? This is like Powell/Peralta era I guess. It made me feel like

Mitch Clem

FANZINE #1

a freak, because while their skating was cool, it was really gendered and not what I wanted to be represented by. I remember the first skater that I felt totally blown away by was Elissa Steamer. When she came out, that was the beginning of actually wanting to be a good skater for me. That never happened! I was a wimp.

Yeah! I like some of that freestyle ballet skate stuff, like Diane Desiderio, who did these sweet choreographed skate moves with a crew of dancers. Honestly, I think that's so cool! But, yeah, it was really gendered, and even though there were men who were a part of freestyle, like Rodney Mullen and Primo Desiderio, they got a lot more recognition than most female skaters from the '80s. Moving into the '90s, dudes who did dancey style freak moves in skateboarding weren't taken seriously because the style was too "feminine", but they still had space to move into different styles and into the mainstream skate world pretty easily. Women, as usual, just kind of got pushed out. At least this is how I understand it.

There were great skaters of the '90s, like Elissa Steamer, Jaime Reyes, or Cara Beth Burnside, to name a few. They were so skilled that they were forced to be recognized by larger entities, but companies really just didn't want to risk having more than one woman or any women on a skate team. I think it had something to do with how much money could be made through skateboarding and how women just weren't marketable to boys. It seems like in the '90s and early '00s the presence of women involved in skating was really growing, but for many reasons, including the profit to be made by the growing male skater population, I think a lot of women's skateboard projects were really overlooked and undervalued. There were those really rad Villa Villa Cola videos and zines, and everyone who was a part of that scene was working really hard to be present, but they didn't even get a whole lot of visibility until recently.

More recently, the visibility of women in skateboarding has really grown. There's more visibility of all these different skaters in some ways, and a lot of it is cool because longtime female skaters are finally able to make decent money in competition skating, where in the past the prize money was disproportionately low for women. There are so many women on teams and sponsored by big companies now, like a lot more than ever before! And a lot of women from the earlier skate scenes have their own shit going, like Meow Skateboards, Hoopla, Gnarhunters, Scene Report, Girls Skate Network, Mahfia Tv, etc. I think there are are a lot of opportunities now for young people, especially girls, to get into skateboarding that maybe aren't as gendered and are as good as or better than most all male teams/companies.

Still there's something about it that's not completely satisfying for me personally because a lot of skateboarding is mainstream and it is a part of this weird business mentality. The mainstream exists and it's not all bad, but I'm not really a part of that and I know a lot of true freaks who aren't either...so now where's the underground skateboarding or whatever, like the punk part of skateboarding? It's like the underground is reserved for outsider males who all still worship *Thrasher* and make their art zine, skate all the time, and live in this amoral *Sons of Anarchy* kind of nasty lifestyle. It's not all like that, but it actually mostly is like that.

I was a total wimp, too! I never felt like an athlete, and I think a lot skateboarders just are jocks, so I never thought I could be a skater. Now I just think that it's more cool to be unbalanced, nervous, and totally inept at skating as long as it's fun or at least satisfying something internally. I think if I saw your zine as a teen, then I would have probably felt less like an outsider, or an outsider with validation, and would have stuck with skating back then…But instead I just immersed myself in punk. I guess years later being a punk inspired me to be a skater again...and here we both are talking about it and hopefully soon to be scheming a skate date! *[laughs]*

MRR: What has the response been to *Not Shit* from the skate community?

The response has been cool, a lot of submissions come from outsiders who have either been polished skateboarders for a long time or are new to it and just trying to make some space for themselves. There are lots of men who I've become friends with through the zine who have been skating for a long time but recognize the misogynist, boring, or lame patterns that exist in a male dominated scene and don't really want to be in that. Then there are so many cool girls from so many different scenes who are creating their own skate communities, projects, or fantasizing about skating to the corner store on a sweaty summer day.

The zine doesn't put value on how skilled people are, it's more just like this weirdo alliance thing...so a lot of the submissions are from different types of weirdos. I think the zine itself is so unstructured sometimes that people don't think of it as a skate zine, but when people do, it's sick. There's kind of all these different types of skate communities, and I'm not entirely sure how *Not Shit* exists in any of them.

MRR: Tell us about the cool shit you just were talking about, the community of cool lady skaters.

There's literally so much! The *Skate Witches* zine has been around for a few years, it's created by a crew from Seattle/Vancouver called the Skate Witches, who borrowed the name from that old Danny Plotnick '80s video. That zine is well curated, full of skateboarding content, how-to guides, interviews with contributors to DIY projects, and it typically only features women, with the exception of the occasional boy interview with questions like, "Did your girlfriend teach you to skate?" There's also Brujas and Femme Skate out of NYC. Actually, I feel like almost every major city has an upcoming girls skate meet-up happening these days. More structured and "non-profit" style stuff can be found through organizations like GRO, Skate Like a Girl, Girls Skate Network, etc. Finally, there are all these other people documenting and reporting on things going on in the current women's skate community like Mahfia TV and Scene Report...the list could honestly go on and on, though—I'm really just naming a few.

MRR: I really like that those crews do skate sessions where you can just go, whatever your ability, and hang out and skate.

Yeah, it can be kind of a vulnerable position to be put in if you're going for the first time, but the point of them is that you can be vulnerable and it's OK.

MRR: I feel like the Girls Rock camps and Skate Like a Girl kind of came up at the same time. DIY music is not something you're supposed to be "taught"—it's not like you go to school to learn it from someone, like with skateboarding you're supposed to just *know*. It seems like those two things are connected to me in some way. So why do you think this is happening right now?

There's a huge need for spaces like Skate Like a Girl and Girls Rock Camps...for me it always goes back to this narrative of people like us talking about how we wish these spaces existed when we were young. So I think a lot of us pour energy into those spaces because we know how hard it can feel without them, or how lost one can be without the tools to be prepared for what ignorance lies outside of a safe space.

Ash-Tray: I had this experience of going to a skate park, and before I even put my foot on my skateboard, six skaters surrounded me and told me to leave. It made me never wanna do it again.

Layla: I think skate culture has this weird self-patrolling thing, self-policing, where if you don't fit the mold, you get hassled, you get fucked with. I definitely had boys intentionally dropping in on my runs when I went to a skate park in a new place I hadn't skated before.

Maybe it's more of an English thing? But it's definitely a thing. I saw a kid get beaten up because he had the wrong clothes on. It's this supposed unconformist culture, but they make everyone conform to this weird reality that sucks.

Ash-Tray: I knew a lot of skaters growing up, they were punks or alternative, but they still really bought into this strict patriarchal culture.

Totally, I always thought skateboarding was this ultimate middle finger to authority, to conformity, to whatever. It attracts punks and weirdos, but it feels like its mostly morally averse, ignorant hordes of males. Just like punks, they are mutants who also probably don't feel like they fit into this fucked up society, but why can't they see that they're doing it all wrong!? Not like punks have everything figured out, but at least we're trying, I guess. I think in most male-dominated skate communities there's absolutely no dialogue around patriarchy or any call out or self-checking.

MRR: One of the cooler things about *Not Shit* is that it seems like it's pretty democratic, a wide range of types of skaters and ideas of skateboarding.

NOT SHIT #02

Really anyone is allowed to submit something. I like the perspective of the zine coming from the skater outsider, though. Like in one issue, someone wrote a story about how they had been in bands and had always wanted to skate like the way they played music, which was not proficient and with mistakes, but at least they would try. It's not a zine for people who are good at skating and trying to take it to the next level, kind of like how in punk and DIY music most people in bands aren't trying to be musicians or something. It's just this thing that we do.

MRR: This is corny to say, but skateboarding is fun *and* dangerous, and it's this place of possibility and fucking around, and it sucks when people just make it into this competitive thing. What was the thing that made you want to start skateboarding again? Was it hanging out with a certain group or just a weird feeling or...

I just really wanted to...I tried on and off several times, and I just couldn't stick with it because I got too embarrassed at the skate park or too nervous from the constant stares I would get or something, you know? I didn't really have any friends who weren't skilled skate dudes to go out with and be dumb and bad and for it to just be okay. So, I kind of said forget it for a while and moved on. A few years later, all of the sudden, I don't know, I really couldn't stop thinking about skating, and I just started getting really into it. I think it was a point in my adult life where I was like, "Fuck it, we should just be doing what we want to do, and I should be skateboarding." I decided that it was okay for me to not know anything about it and just try it, y'know? Like I just walked into a local skate shop and let myself be really vulnerable with whatever overly confident teenage boy was at the shop at the time. I just said that I wanted to buy a board, but I didn't know how or what I needed. Then he helped me, and it was fine. I just started skating everywhere I went.

Eventually, when I felt comfortable skating to work or to the store, I wanted to learn more, but I got so much street harassment that I couldn't even fathom going to a skatepark alone. So, I dunno, I guess I just felt like I really needed some folks who got that, and I needed to be in a place where I could just hang out and skate and be bad. That's how I stumbled upon Skate Like a Girl and just went to a skate date, opening up this whole new world of people to skate with where I didn't feel like a dumbass, and there wasn't any pressure, and everyone was just down. I felt like how most teenage boys probably feel! Confident, ready to take on new challenges. I'm joking, kinda.

I guess it was a combination of getting over anxiety and finding the right people to be surrounded by that got me back in skateboarding for good.

MRR: There's always something that feels like you aren't cool enough to go to the skatepark, like I even had that with Skate Like a Girl, just that I was too old and felt intimidated

There's always something in your head that's like "I shouldn't go to that, I'm not good enough" or "It's gonna be too hard."

MRR: I think it's like a consciousness that we're taught, about our bodies and exposure and being an extrovert in any way with your body. You instantly have this click in your brain, "Oh no, I can't do that."

Absolutely. It's hard to undo.

MRR: It's been really cool seeing women really clearly overcome that in punk by doing bands. I mean, every summer every girl in London I know talks about going skating, I would love to see that translate into a thing that actually happens!

It's cool because we know that it can happen! Like what you're saying, we do it all the time in punk...

MRR: Did you take pictures before starting the zine? You take a lot of the pictures in it, right?

Yeah...Kind of? Not necessarily skate pictures though. Before the zine, I didn't go anywhere near a skatepark or skater dudes, and I didn't want to take pictures of men being athletic. I mean, I kind of just did it all at once, started skating all the time, starting taking pictures, started the zine.

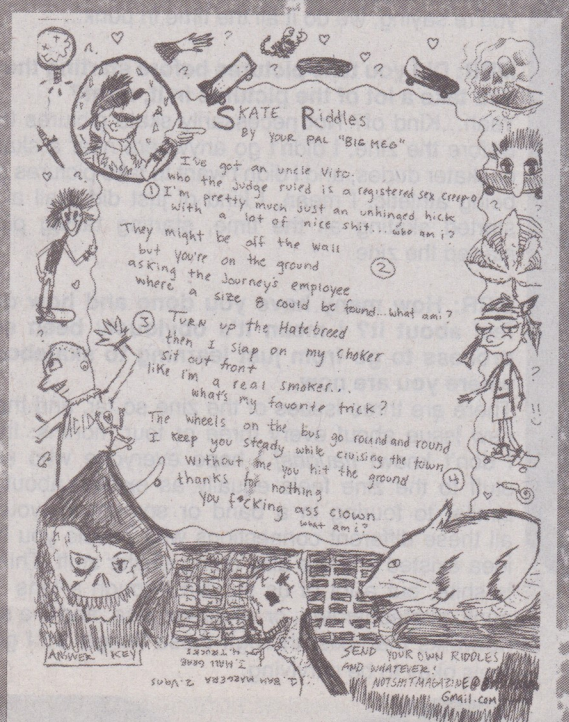
MRR: How many have you done and how do you feel about it? I mean it's obviously been such a process to go from just learning to skateboard to where you are now.

There are three issues of the zine so far, and there's a new issue about every three or four months. Its cool, I don't know! *[laughs]* I hope everyone who submits stuff to the zine feels equally as excited about it. It's similar to touring in a band or something, you make all these different connections with people you had no idea existed and are also doing similar stuff. This world is shite, but a lot of us survive through a lens of DIY, punk, skateboarding, or whatever else, and the support networks that exist through those things, so I guess it feels okay to be surviving.

MRR: The only thing I can compare it to is really wanting to do a band, and never thinking that I would be able to do one, and then I did...and now I am unleashed! An extended version of myself that I never thought I'd get to, and it really has completely changed the way I see the world. I don't know if it's the same?
Yeah, it's so similar! When you skate the empty streets at night, or eat shit at the secret spot with your friends, you never really see concrete the same again. All of the sudden a parking lot is like the coolest spot you ever want to hang out, and all those odd shaped structures that tend to be in front of weird government buildings look a lot more appealing.

MRR: It's just cool having something that you never thought could be yours, and then it is.
That's why DIY is so cool. It's crazy. You just make something! And sometimes people like it.

MRR: That's why skateboarding is so cool. I mean, it does have that weird jock aura but then there are so many radical aspects to it. You don't actually need any money to do it. Once you have a skateboard, I mean. Most similar sports, like surfing or snowboarding, you really have to invest in equipment and travel in a way that makes it prohibitive if you are not rich. With skateboarding, you can just reappropriate the landscape around you. You don't need a park. It sucks when people get intimidated and think that they can't do it, that there's a "real" way to do it. I read this stupid interview with Blink-182 where they talked about how shitty the Go-Go's were because they couldn't play their instruments. First off, obviously they could, they made these consummate pop records! But then their best stuff was when they were part of the Hollywood punk scene and those bootlegs of this era where they just sound like shitpunk are just perfect! I think this is where skateboarding and punk match. It's better when it's raw, before the weird, like, corporate bro Blink dudes take it over, and all the true freaks get scared to do it. That's what I liked about your fanzine. It's so rad because it's so open ended, it's not just for and about the Elissa Steamers, it's also for the girls that just skate to the corner and fuck around.
It's like what you said about having many audiences. So many people have talked to me about your zine. My friend from Austin texted me about it, how she felt like she was in her thirties and it was such a bummer she had never skated, and she wanted to start. There's this whole audience of people that have always wanted to and now they will! I think your fanzine is so incredible for that. Putting across that true and basic idea of skateboarding, that it's just a fun thing to do with your friends. I don't ever want to become a proficient musician. I don't ever wanna learn to shred. It's just that amazing thing of learning of how to be better at something using your own concept of being good at it.
Yeah, I mean, I can't even believe how people cant see the Go-Go's as one of the greatest punk bands of all time! There are for sure the Mark Hoppuses and Matt Skibas of skateboarding, and then there are the Belinda Carlisles, Jane Wiedlins, Alice Bags, Poly Styrenes, and Maria Tetas of skateboarding. Sure, I'll tap my fingers to a Blink-182 song every now and then, but at the end of the day I know I'm a poseur and I don't care.



MRR: OK, rapidfire section: What's your favorite thing to do while skating?
Busted Boneless where you boneless extremely slow motion, shitty 180 No Complies where you kind of bail at the end but it's OK and you just walk away, Mini Manz, the Squat, Trotskyite Jumps—kinda like a Hippie Jump, but I always lose balance and fall after.

MRR: Do you bring tunes to skate to? What's your favorite thing to listen to when skating?
Too many to name, honestly. Brie Goldstein made a rare mix tape for *Not Shit, Songs to Skate To*. She's kind of a regular contributor to the zine now and is working on a whole lot of mixes, like "songs to get injured to."

MRR: What are your top tips for getting into skateboarding?
Don't let anyone tell you that you can't skate in boots. Trust your body, trust yourself and know that you are tight. Do crimes.

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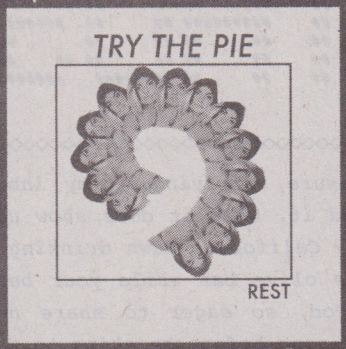

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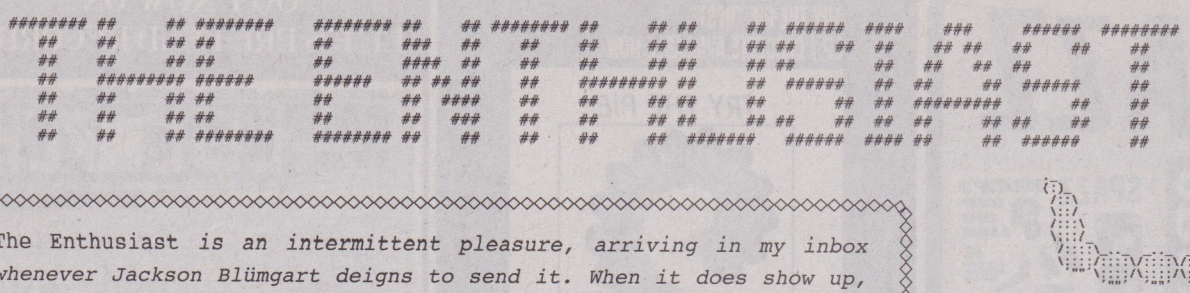


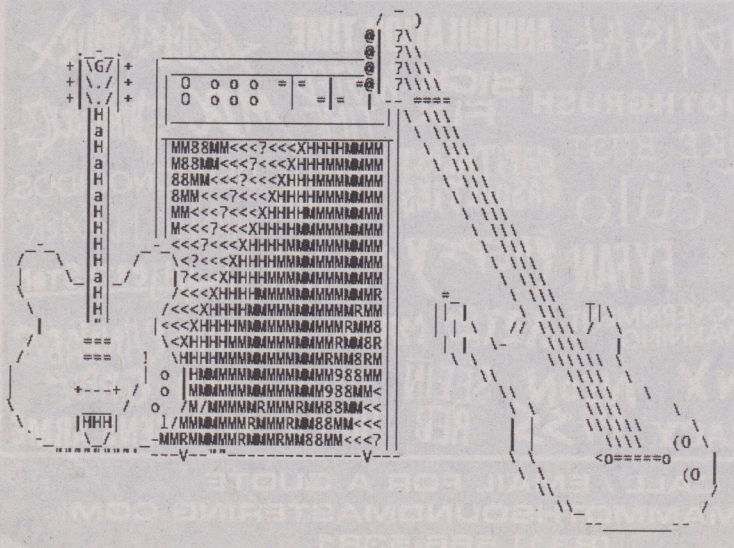
The Enthusiast *is an intermittent pleasure, arriving in my inbox whenever Jackson Blümgart deigns to send it. When it does show up, reading it's like bopping around a hilly California town drinking a Slurpee and skimming off a grocery store olive bar while your best friend frantically flips through his iPod, so eager to share new music that you only hear 30 seconds of a song before he skips to the next. That's not to say that* the Enthusiast *isn't in-depth, because it is, but Jackson is a fan who knows the limitations and potential of an email zine.* The Enthusiast *is adorned with ASCII masterpieces, stuffed with interviews, sprinkled with snippets of Jackson's days and dreams, and drowning in, well, enthusiasm. I spoke to him via email in February 2016.*

Introduction and interview by Shivaun Watchorn.
Art by Bob Allison, JGS, and Stef.

MRR: Is *the Enthusiast* your first zine?
It is my first zine, though I truly consider it to be an email newsletter. No shots to zine culture, which I understand is a beautiful thing, but *the Enthusiast* is designed to be enjoyed over the medium of email!

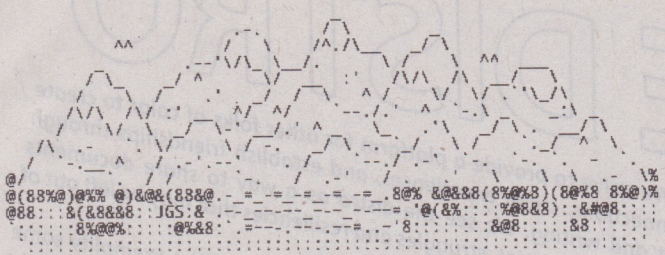
MRR: Do you participate in zine culture, whatever that means to you?
I wouldn't say that I do, honestly! I enjoyed the zine library at Gilman when I was younger, mostly because if I had something in my hands and looked like I was intently reading something stimulating then I wouldn't have to worry about sitting there awkwardly waiting to find someone to find something to talk about with. I usually can find some aspect of a zine to enjoy, and I like reading people's perspectives, but most of the time my brain goes to the way it was laid out, photocopy decisions, how they stapled it, etc., and the words/content sometimes just evaporates, which is my fault more than the zine's, I'd say.

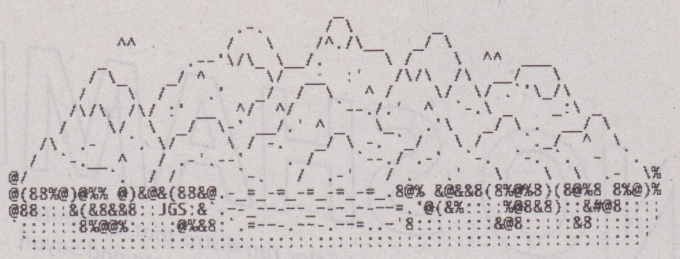
MRR: What was the first zine you ever encountered? Have you been to a zine festival before?
I believe it was a *MRR*, though the words were so close together I had a hard time reading it for long periods of time, but I enjoyed the ads and pictures. The first zines I really remember loving were *Insubordination* and *Breakout* mags. I bought both from Amoeba in Berkeley the same day I bought my first Black Flag, Minutemen, and Bikini Kill 7"s. *Insubordination* was a zine focused on the Berkeley/Oakland teen punk scene of bands like Wet Nap, Link 80, the Young and the Useless, Subincision, etc., that played at places like Gilman, Berkeley Square, Cloyne Court, and Le Chateau. I was too young to attend these shows, but it was really illuminating to hear about stuff happening in my area that seemed cool. I remember loving the zine because the typos were many and always really amusing, like there was an article about Nirvana sucking but they spelled it "Nirvarna," and I just have to believe that that wasn't a joke. *Breakout* was a magazine focused on hardcore. [There were] a lot of OBHC bands featured, which was important also to me because it's cool to see stuff from your hometown. Anyway, those were two of my favorite bigger mags growing up. I never attended a zine festival!



MRR: You're a musician, too. When you make music, do you think about how people will write about it? Do you write blurbs for your own bands?
I don't think I have ever thought specifically about how someone would write about the music I'm involved in while it's being formulated, though I have thought about specific people and what they might think of a song afterwards, but more of like, "Oh, I wonder if this person might like this song." Generally, I don't get a lot out of music writing, especially in the music writing that comes from the brains of record collector-y, usually male, know-it-all types who present their opinions about art as though they are some kind of definitive critique that should be valued as much as or even more than the art it is critiquing. I never went to college, though, so perhaps I just don't understand criticism correctly, but a lot of times it seems like it's more about the critic than the stuff it should be about? But whatever. Um, for the second part of the question, this is embarrassing, but I did write a blurb once for a Yi record that no one would write about. I just tried to sum it up thinking as a non-band member and credited it to "Press Solutions."

MRR: *The Enthusiast* is a digital zine, but it retains some aspects of paper zines. The text is not easy to copy and paste. Why did you choose this format?
I think most people who have day jobs usually have some portion of the day they are sitting at their desks doing things on the computer, and I figured it would be easier for them to pretend like they are working





while reading *the Enthusiast* if it was plain white background with plain text. Partially inspired by Zounds "Subvert" and partially inspired by this European electronic musician Legowelt who does a great text cyberzine called *The Order of the Shadow Wolf*, which was a huge inspiration.

MRR: Are there other cyberzines you would recommend? Do you feel a sense of community around cyberzines?
I don't really follow anything enough to be able to recommend, but through doing *the Enthusiast* people have sent me to lots of cyber/ASCII/text-based stuff on the net which have caught my fancy to varying degrees. It's all out there if you look, I've discovered. I know for me it's easy to forget that there's a lot of cool things happening outside of the Facebook/Tumblr/Twitter/Instagram sort of "approved" corner of the internet! I wouldn't really say I feel any sense of community around cyberzines, though I'm certain there is a scene or multiple scenes of people doing far cooler shit with a text editor than I am and feeling like they are a part of something must be really great for them.

MRR: One thing I really love about *the Enthusiast* is its breadth. You talk to musicians and artists of all genres and media, but it does seem rooted in punk and the social world surrounding it. I also really like that it has other diversions, almost like an old issue of *Pessimiser*, or even *Highlights* or something.
I try to stay true to the original motivation and also the title I gave it because sometimes it's very easy for me to get stuck thinking about music or culture or people or things in the world that I really dislike and am sad even exist, which means a lot of things that are great and make me happy, intrigued, infatuated, curious, etc., get less time in my brain. I just try to stay focused on things that make me glad to be here alive right now and able to find joy in shit, which is mainly fascinating people, Bay Area rap, punk and electronic music, and an occasional trip to the apple orchard of my mind.

MRR: I think *the Enthusiast* strikes a perfect balance in the current media climate. It's not a zine with months-old record reviews and an insipid intro section about how you got busy and couldn't finish your zine, but it's not a timely-yet-fleeting think piece either.
I definitely like things that you can return to—music, movies, leftover pasta, even—and derive new enjoyment out of. I'm really honored that the people I ask to interview are so forthcoming about themselves and really give up the goods in interesting ways so that even though I'm the one conducting the interview, I feel like I can revisit it and pick up new things [with] each read.

MRR: What is your process for approaching interviewees? Do you plan out questions ahead of time? Do you have any white whale interviews?
I had never interviewed anyone before the first issue, when I interviewed Matt Korvette [from Pissed Jeans and *Yellow Green Red*]. He was a good first interview because he is easy to talk to and interesting and gives answers that easily spawn continued lines of questioning. I think usually I just think of one aspect of something I know about the subject I'm interviewing and then wing it from there, which is cool because it ends up being more conversational, which is more engaging mentally, I think. I dunno if I have many white whales. Most people I've contacted to be interviewed have been very open and gracious with their time and thoughts, but I'd love to talk to Dave Chappelle, Kim Deal, and Genesis P-Orridge.

MRR: Do you subscribe to anyone's Tinyletter or any other email newsletters? What do you think about that format? Do you read distro email updates?
I do not subscribe to Tinyletter, I'm not sure I've heard of it! It sounds cool, though. I generally don't read distro email updates outside of Aquarius Records and Not Not Fun, but those two are really, really great and each reach incredible levels of hyperbole and poetry in their record descriptions. Sometimes I just spend Saturday nights at home burning candles and reading previous weeks' Aquarius emails.

MRR: Do you have any plans for the future of *the Enthusiast*?
I'm just winging it! Thanks!

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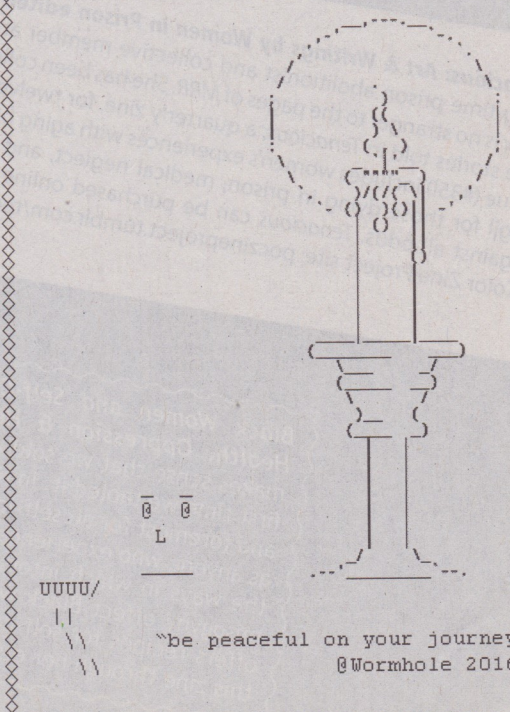
Check out back issues of the Enthusiast *and subscribe at magnetizer.altervista.org. To receive the latest issue in your email inbox, send a letter to wormhole@openmailbox.org.*

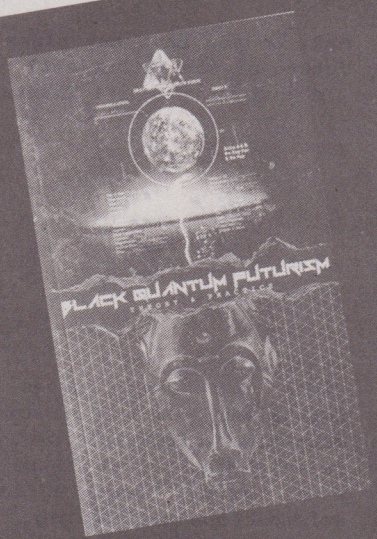


NO SHAME DISTRO

No Shame Distro is a People of Color run distro that distributes zines and small artworks by POC. We (Khristina Acosta and Sayuri Gomez) formed the distro three years ago in New Brunswick, New Jersey during the spring of 2013. It's been three years! Right now we only distro at shows, zine fests, and other DIY type events but we have a collaboration in the works with Philadelphia Printworks (philadelphiaprintworks.com) that may enable us do to mail order. Until then if mail order is your thing you can check out our sister distro, Brown Recluse Distro, run by Nyky Gomez (brownreclusezinedistro.com).

We strive to provide a platform for other folks of color to create connections, share experiences, and establish friendships through art and writing. We see the distro as a way to share documents about our histories, struggles and resiliencies that may be left out of popular narratives.

Here are eight zines, in no particular order, that exemplify some of the amazing stories and ideas being created by POC writers right now.



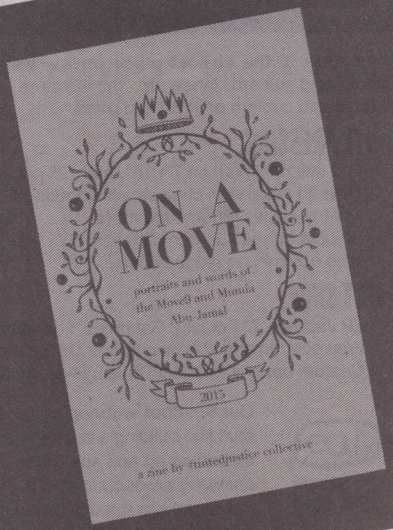
***Black Quantum Futurism: Theory and Practice* by the Afrofuturist Affair / House of Future Sciences.** Rasheedah Phillips is one quarter of the incredible Philly based Queer People of Color science fiction collective Metropolarity (metropolarity.net). She is also the founding member of the Afrofuturist Affair / House of Future Sciences (afrofuturistaffair.com) which promotes and expands Afrofuturism and sci-fi through creative events and writing. Black Quantum Futurism is a continuation of all of this. BQF takes aspects of quantum physics, futurist traditions, and Black/African cultural traditions of consciousness, time, and space to re-imagine these concepts outside of Western linear time constraints. Prepare to have your fucking mind blown. You can get this and its continuation *Black Quantum Futurism Space Time Collapse I: From the Congo to the Carolinas* at futuresciences.storeenvy.com.

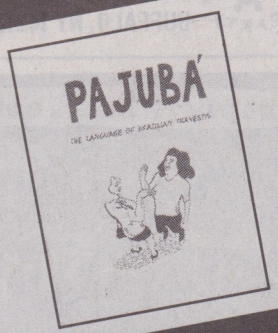
***Tenacious*: Art & Writings by Women in Prison edited by Vikki Law.** A long-time prison abolitionist and collective member at ABC No Rio Vikki Law is no stranger to the pages of *MRR*. She has been collecting and sharing the stories told in *Tenacious*, a quarterly zine, for twelve years. The newest issue (#35!) includes women's experiences with aging behind bars, holding vigil for those dying in prison, medical neglect, and self-transformation against all odds. *Tenacious* can be purchased online from the People of Color Zine Project site: poczineproject.tumblr.com/tenaciouszine.

***Think About the Bubbles #8: Trust the Knife* by Joyce Hatton.** After being diagnosed with cancer it became obvious to Joyce that she was also dealing with addiction and an untreated mental illness. This illustrated zine shares her despair, isolation, tenacity, and dark humor, but also her joy and wonder at making it through. You can get a copy by reaching out to Joyce at JoyceHatton@gmail.com.

***Black Women and Self-Care: Thoughts on Mental Health, Oppression & Healing* by Naomi Moyer.** It makes sense that we sold all our copies of this zine the first time we tabled it. In Naomi's words "this zine is first and foremost for all self-identifying Black women as well as anyone who experiences mental health." She explores the ways in which intersections of racism, sexism, and misogyny effect Black women's mental health and also offers recipes for self care remedies. You can purchase this zine through her etsy elastiquedesigns.

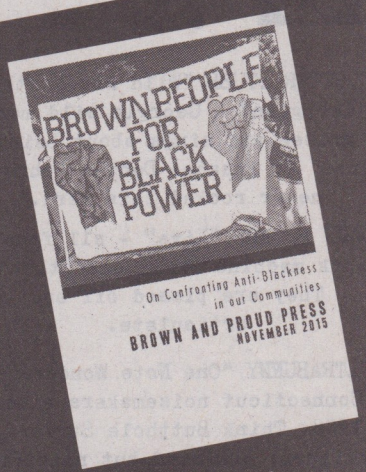
***On A Move: Portraits and Words of the Move9 and Mumia Abu-Jamal* by the #TintedJustice Collective.** #TintedJustice is a small collective based out of Philadelphia and comprised of queer Womyn of color who seek to challenge anti-Blackness within their communities as well as stand in solidarity with the #BlackLivesMatter movment in Philly and beyond. MOVE is a Philadelphia based Black liberation group that was started in 1972 by John Africa. They are best known for being the target of the infamous city-ordered bombing on May 13, 1985 that destroyed sixty-plus homes in a West Philadelphia neighborhood and killed eleven MOVE members. Using excerpts from the online autobiographies of the MOVE9, who prior to the bombing were arrested and convicted without the possibility of parole, the #TintedJustice collective illustrated portraits of each person. The zine serves as a reminder of the resistance and struggles of the past but also how these connect to current struggles and concerns. This zine can be purchased through tintedjustice@gmail.com or tintedjustice.tumblr.com.





***Pajubá*: The Language of Brazilian Travestis by Eloisa Aquino.** Aquino begins this illustrated zine by stating that "Travestis tend to consider themselves a separate gender, neither woman nor man, nor in-between." This zine explores the ways in which this group of marginalized people uses language, in this case Pajubá, as a way to protect and empower themselves. You can get this zine or Eloisa's other beautifully illustrated zine series *The Life & Times of Butch Dykes* at BandDpress.etsy.com

***On Confronting Anti-Blackness in our Communities* by Brown and Proud Press and the Moonroot Collective.** Brown and Proud Press is a collective of people of color based out of Chicago. They use zines as a way to share their personal narratives and histories in order to commune with others and promote healing. The Moonroot collective is a group of Asian writers who are dispersed on both coasts of the US who use zines in a similar way. Together they explore and examine the ways in which anti-Black racism can be challenged and dismantled in their lives and communities. Without solidarity and coalition building with Black folks we will still all be held by white supremacy. This zine can be purchased through Brown Recluse Distro or read online at issuu.com/brownandproudpresschicago/docs/combined_split_zine.compressed



We are currently looking for zines by POC Trans Women and Trans Femmes.

If you are interested in us distributing your work please get in touch at noshamedistro@gmail.com or send us mail at No Shame Distro, PO Box 5105, New Brunswick, NJ 08903

noshamedistro.tumblr.com

***Godzilla Grrrl: A Journey to the Wall* by Monstrochika.** Monstrochika grew up in the Logan Square area of Chicago in the '90s. At first apprehensive about exploring her love of graffiti it isn't until she sees Lady Pink talk at the Art Institute of Chicago that she realizes she can be a graffiti writer too. Art, graffiti in particular, enables her to carve out her own identity and move away from the tyranny of her father and toward her own independence. You can get a copy at Monstrochika.com

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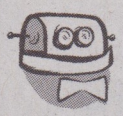

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PLAY

VIDEO ZINES

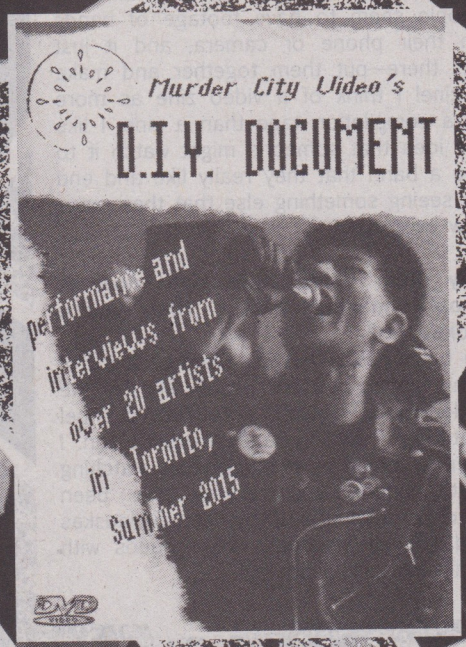
PARANOID ANXIETIES

Will Mecca / wmecca1@gmail.com
thelefthandpath.storenvy.com

How do you publish your zine?
It gets self-published on VHS, mostly over thrift store VHS and housed in Disney big boxes. I decided on VHS because I film on various film-based mediums, and I felt that releasing it that way would be appropriate. I have a Storenvy set up to get tapes, and most of the time when I go on treks out of town I try to carry copies on me—you never know if anyone is going to shake you down for a copy or not.

Why do a video and not print?
I started toying with the idea of doing a zine about the time I had been filming shows around Dallas/Fort Worth/Denton for about two years. I had all of this footage, and I felt like I needed to use it in some other way than dumping out onto YouTube. I did a video zine because, in my own opinion, I don't think I can express myself in words as well as I want to most of the time. I had attempted traditional zines once or twice at that point but backed out due to dissatisfaction with what I saw presented. But when it comes to video, I just let what I film speak for itself, and I'm a bit more comfortable with that.

Favorite moment you've caught?
I have a few. The first is this footage of an after-show from when the Flex and Violent Reaction came to Fort Worth. One of the bands on the after-show covered "Ready To Fight" by Negative Approach. One of the Brits in the quiet part of the song walks towards the camera, lets out this shriek, starts punching the air, and goes back to slamming. Another is this candid footage from when I saw Nancy in Kansas City and after a song finishes you see my friends Trae and Austin embracing with Trae yelling, "I'm so fucking happy! I'm drunk and I'm happy." And one more would be Beta Boys and some of the Denton punks in the back yard of this house called Sus City smashing whatever they can find against a tool shed, and everyone in the video is laughing hysterically. Just the little moments.



MURDER CITY VIDEO

Scott Jenner / murdercityvideo@aol.com
murdercityvideo.bigcartel.com

Where'd you get the name of your zine?
D.I.Y. Document. This year's installment (the first) focused primarily on Toronto's D.I.Y. punk venue S.H.I.B.G.B's. There was a free, monthly article called Document created by Youth and Rust with submissions that was available in print at the venue. I borrowed the name from that.

What are you working on now?
I'm working on a Toronto D.I.Y. documentary mostly focused around Ryan's record store here, Faith/Void. Another thing that is happening is that I will be with SHIT and Triage on their week long east coast tour in April and getting coverage of everything from Damaged City, those big NYC gigs, and house shows, so I will have a few short episodes for online format. We have a few surprises in store for that series.

I also have a concert DVD of a performance by VCR and SHIT at the Galleria Mall here in Toronto. It's in post-production. The sound and visuals are recorded much better than the home movie style of my other docs. Hoping to have it done for the tour.

Are you working on anything else besides the live band videozine?
I also do [a] fiction series that is very much involved with punk. My cyberpunk genre series, "Murder City Cult," reached funding goals last year, and I am finishing post-production on the first full format, 22-minute episode. I am aiming to release two episodes this year and follow up with a shocking conclusion in 2017.

The less fiscally demanding series I am now shooting is a punk comedy for the web. "The Boys: Aloha, From Hawaii" is a web series coming early this summer that stars the awesome teenage punk band the Boys, as well as the Dilettantes from Toronto. The series chronicles the scandalous events leading up to the Boys' debut performance in Hawaii.

I wish I could quit my day job.

NOZIN' AROUN'

Ben Fordree / fordree@googlemail.com
youtube.com/user/benfordree

What's the name of your zine? Where'd you get the name?
The zine is called *Nozin' Aroun'*. The title sequence is lifted straight from an episode of *The Young Ones*—essential punk television from the '80s chronicling the lives of a punk, a hippie, an anarchist, and a geezer; four students living in squalor with bands like the Damned and Motörhead playing in their living room. *Nozin' Aroun'* is a television show within the television show, "a program for *young adults*, made by *young adults*, and concentrating on all the subjects that *young adults* are into." I hope that young adults are into my zine.

Why'd you start the zine?
I always wanted to make a paper zine, but I find it quite hard to write things, so a video seemed like a great way to avoid writing anything. I had made videos a few years ago on a telephone camera. I think that a lot of interesting things have been happening in London lately, so I bought a camera and started to film things. Before I knew it, I had a load of footage, so I thought the best thing to do would be to put it all together.

Any advice for filming bands or doing a video zine?
Nowadays video recording equipment is so much more accessible. Lot's of people seem to have footage of bands on their phone or camera, and it just sits there—put them together and make a zine! I think of a video zine as more of a compilation tape than a zine. I like the idea that someone might watch it to see a band that they really like and end up seeing something else that they never new existed.

Any other video zines right now or people making videos that you're stoked on?
To be honest, I haven't watched a lot of punk video zines, but I really like "At the Boiler Room," which is a YouTube channel featuring a lot of bands from Boston. I spent a lot of my teenage years watching skate videos and recently I've been watching a lot of stuff by Peter Sidlauskas and William Strobeck. Great videos with really interesting editing!

MTV 12

VJ Misty & VJ Dawn
musictelevision12@gmail.com
mtv12.com

What can people do to see clips or buy a video?
VJ Misty: They can subscribe to the Don Giovanni Records YouTube channel for full episodes, and subscribe to the MTV12 YouTube channel for hot interviews with the likes of none other than the head shitworker herself, Grace Ambrose. Plus more!
VJ Dawn: Please only look if you're interested in journalistic excellence.

What are you filming on? How are you editing?
VJ Misty: We pretty much exclusively use a little program called Photobooth that you may or may not be familiar with, and a very sophisticated software program called iMovie that comes fully stocked with boing boing sound effects and stuff.
VJ Dawn: This is a pro tip that you won't hear anywhere else: iMovie is probably on your computer.

What have you learned since starting the zine?
VJ Misty: Anything in slo-mo is funny. Zooming in on people's faces is always funny. Adding a boing boing sound effect is usually funny, but almost never nearly as funny as the first two techniques.
VJ Dawn: Yeah, I don't know what else there is to learn.

Tape Appeal

Chad Bucklew / stainedwithbleach@gmail.com

Why'd you start the zine? Why a video zine?
I started the zine because I just wanted to document what's been going on in the Northwest. I really like Target Video, the Screamers, and stuff like that a lot, so I've kind of always wanted to do a video zine but was pretty intimidated by where or how to start, but once I broke the ice and did the first issue, I realized I could totally do it, so I did.

What are you filming on? How are you editing?
I've just filmed on old VHS camcorders I've found at thrift stores. I do all my editing/dubbing from VCR to VCR all real time. I like to keep things very simple (and time consuming, haha). I also hand cut out and glue all the soft cases I package them in. This is one of the reasons I can be so hot and cold with it. If I have a lot going on (tours, shows, ect.) I just won't pick it up, but when I got a lot of free time I'll be like, "Damn I'm bored and unemployed...Oh shit, I should release that footage I got last week and make a couple bucks to eat!" Haha.

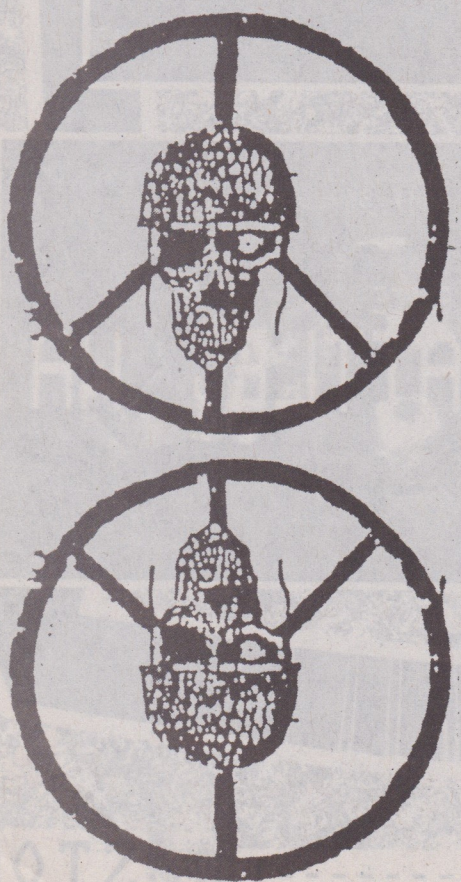
Favorite moment you've caught on video?
Definitely Beta Boys (the "after dark" lineup) pillow fighting for 20 minutes in an Elvis themed hotel. Coming to a YouTube near you soon.

Any advice for filming bands or doing a video zine?
Get a light or some sort of night vision camera. So many awesome shows I've filmed have been completely unusable due to the dimly lit standard punk show settings. Also, just go for it! Videos zines are easy; all you have to do is film it and put it out! No writing, no formatting, no reviewing. All you gotta do is lurk thrift stores and then walk around with a camera and slightly annoy everyone.

hardcore punk fan-zine GENERAL SPEECH fuck off other cheap fanzine!!

There may not be a more noise-obsessed maniac in all of punk than Tom Mayhugh, the man behind the General Speech *fanzine and record label. Championing the wildest (and sometimes weirdest) in noisy punk and hardcore,* General Speech *is a throwback to an era when cut'n'paste fanzines were the cornerstone of DIY punk's global network of friends. His label releases raw punk and hardcore by new and old bands from all over the world, his fanzine omnibus collections* (Hardcore Anachronistic Assembly) *bring together zinesters from just as many places, and his own writing in* General Speech *routinely has me scrambling to hear every obscure group he mentions. In the interview that follows, Tom answers a few questions about why he makes zines, what he looks for in punk music, and the elusive tapes and records that keep him up at night.*

Introduction and interview by Golnar Nikpour



MRR: Can you tell me a little bit about your history making zines? Had you worked on fanzines before you started *General Speech*? How often do you do a new issue?
I've done *General Speech* for about four years now, and before that I did a fanzine called *Evil Minded*. I do a new issue of *General Speech* whenever I have enough content. For instance, in 2015 I didn't release any issues, but I'm working on two new ones right now. I print about 100-150 of each issue of *General Speech* and send them out for cost of postage or for free with orders on the General Speech record label. Then, every four issues, I collect all the content and release an omnibus issue.

MRR: Tell me about *Evil Minded*. Was it in the same vein as *General Speech*, or did it have a different focus?
The focus was a bit different. *Evil Minded* was intentionally focused on international hardcore and also featured my frustrated young punk political writing. I wasn't really enjoying a lot of HC bands in the US at the time, so I focused elsewhere. It was a full-size fanzine. I was making and selling a lot of copies but eventually it became too much work. Meanwhile, *General Speech* is a free half-size fanzine, and I've shifted the focus to just writing on what I'm most passionate about rather than trying to stay on the tip of new and interesting stuff. *General Speech* gave me a fresh start.

MRR: One of the things that I really like about *General Speech* is the fanatical collector interest in obscure weirdo punk without the shitty collector preference of necessarily focusing on the impossibly expensive. Some of that seems to have to do with format—like, you are interested in obscure VHS releases, tape-only stuff, music from uncool eras, etc. What draws you to these sorts of things? Is it just the sounds you find, or is it partially because no one else seems to even notice most of this stuff? Why write about all of this truly obscure noise?
I have no idea, though I think about this a lot. I think that deep down I've always appreciated basic expression through punk music. Something about music that is unheard, unknown, and quite often untalented appeals to me. I've never been musically talented, so I relate to the bands that never really made it—bands that were angry and put whatever they had into their band but then fizzled out.

Another part of it is just some obsessive trait that I have. The *Messthetics* CDs drove me insane when I first heard them because of the realization that this kind of music was everywhere. Chuck [Warner, of *Hyped2Death* and *Messthetics* fame] has done with UK punk what pretty much no one else has done anywhere else. I think it's impossible to find everything, but it's worth trying to find as much as I can and share it with others.

MRR: Chuck definitely changed the game, but compared to *Messthetics*, most of the stuff you champion is much more unpleasant!
The primitiveness of a lot of these obscure bands is very charming!

MRR: Is this the idea with the music you release / reissue as well?
I'd say that's accurate. Part of it is that I try to satisfy myself as a collector. I'd want a G-Gas record in my collection or the opportunity to get more unreleased Psycho Sin stuff. These are records I want, am passionate about, and think are legitimately good.

MRR: Do you ever deal with people who are confused about what you're doing? I mean other punks who just shake their heads at the idea of reissuing the Decay or Psycho Sin? Cuz even within the context of punk/HC, that stuff is uniquely incompetent.
Oh yeah! When he learned I was reissuing the Decay, Erik from *Negative Insight* zine said, "Has he heard it?!"

MRR: I first heard the Decay at *MRR*. I pulled the 7" out because I thought the cover looked cool, but when I put it on I straight up couldn't tell what speed to play it on. My first response to hearing that music was to laugh. It was so strange, even for raw '80s HC. At some point years ago, I did a set of "best bad records in the *MRR* collection" and played Psycho Sin and the Decay, and there were other *MRR* people there just laughing and laughing…
I think you have to have a sense of humor about it. I'm sure people laughed at the Sex Pistols when they first heard them, and then those same people realized it's the best music in the world just a couple of months later!

MRR: Still, what I appreciate is that you take this music deadly seriously even though, as you say, you have a sense of humor about it. Have you found other obsessive noise freaks in the process of doing *General Speech*?
Yes, most definitely. Sometimes painfully.

MRR: How so? Do tell!
People here have literally no idea the depth of some collections. Some Japanese freaks come to mind. It's amazing to chat music with them because sometimes I'll think I have a leg up, or I'll try to trade with them, but then find out they literally have it all! Seeing collections like that is painfully bittersweet, but it also gives me hope. If they can find it, I'm positive I can, too.

MRR: It never ends does it?
I think sometimes I take it too seriously. People probably won't believe me, but I actually lose sleep over this stuff. Like, the first time I heard Wild Bonvers, I was awake for 24 hours. I had to take off from work 'cause hearing them was so revolutionary. I listened to them over and over.

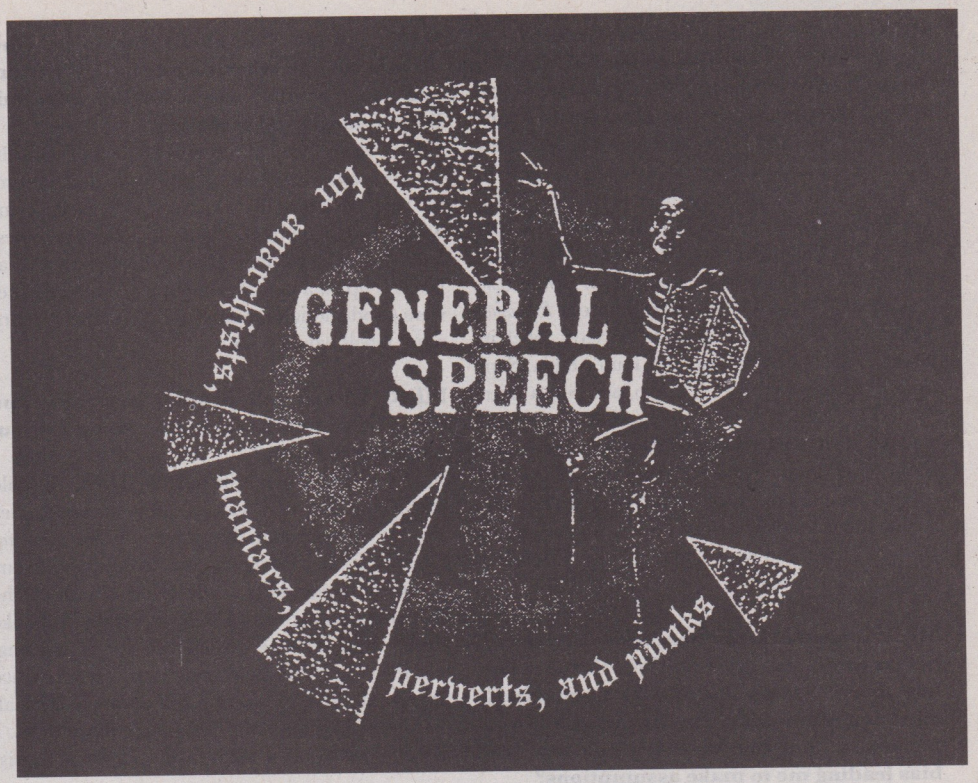
MRR: Given your extremely dedicated approach, how do you feel about the different ups and downs in popularity of noisy HC in the past few years?
It's interesting to see the hivemind of scenes and what gets popular and what doesn't. I can't understand the scene ups and downs, honestly.

MRR: How do you balance your interest in older stuff with not losing sight of current raw HC? For instance, you've been a big champion of the recent Mexican HC scene...
I try to stay as un-jaded as possible. The people in the Mexican scene are people that I really feel a personal connection to. Like, it seemed that I would enjoy hanging out with them and talking music, and that was definitely the case when I finally got to meet some of them. Of course, their music being amazing is what got me interested in the first place

MRR: What do you look for in current bands?
I check out new bands regularly, and honestly, not a lot sticks. But if we can't keep pushing on with punk and hardcore, I feel like I'd lose a bit of my reason for living. As for what I look for, it's really hard to say. The music, definitely, but sometimes I get really drawn into the vibe and aesthetic of a band as well. I love graphic design and aesthetics, and it pains me to see a good band with record art that I don't like.

MRR: Oh, I totally agree. For instance, I've been in a deep depression ever since I saw how damn ugly the Warwound demo reissue LP is.
Yes, exactly! I've been writing for a local punk zine, and I reviewed Warwound and said how bittersweet that reissue is for me because the music is immense, but the artwork doesn't hold a candle to it at all.

MRR: Is *General Speech* political? Do you care about politics in punk or with bands or zines?
I'm drawn to bands that are political and a bit outsider 'cause those bands are usually the angriest, and I like bands that sound angry. Politics are important to me, particularly given what's going on in the world. I don't see how one could brush them aside or claim disinterest. I can listen to apolitical punk, and it doesn't bother me, but when people are angry about the current state of things, I typically feel a deeper connection to their music. For instance—and I know people have mixed feelings about them, and their music is not my standard fare—I feel a deep connection to Sleaford Mods because I love their lyrics. If I could make music, I would want to write songs like that.



MRR: Is there a point where a punk band could be *too* apolitical? Or too political? I'm asking because your zine, in some ways, seems like a throwback in the current climate of US punk, which is—at least from my point of view—less invested in the relationship between politics and punk than ever before.
I think so. For instance, GG Allin annoys me. It's OK from a musical perspective, but the over-the-top apolitical anti-PC aspects annoy me. I would hate to say a band could be *too* political because if they feel strongly about their politics, I wouldn't want to stop them from their efforts. What I can't get behind is people who are political but who express their views in a constantly preaching manner, where it seems like they aren't even angry. They just repeat their basic rhetoric over and over. If someone is angry about something and shouting about it in a punk song or on the streets, that's cool. I guess the social media armchair political activist is what I'm railing against. Luckily—or maybe sadly, given the current political climate—these people seem to be fewer and farther between.

MRR: Are there other zines that you consider your peers right now? Older zines that you liked / learned from?
I love *Cretins Of Distortion*. Everything about that zine is a hundred times more enthusiastic than I could be; it gives me hope for future punk. I see some similarities between Emmy and myself cause of how much we dig into both new and old stuff. Even when I don't like 100% of the music being written about a whole lot, it's still great to read. *Negative Insight* is great. Erik is even more of a perfectionist than I am; he really digs deep. *Defiant Pose* from UK is amazing. Mike Clarke is a maniac—I hope my UK collection is half as good as his someday!

MRR: How about older zines? What got you into fanzine culture in the first place?
I read *HeartattaCk*, *Slug and Lettuce*, and *MRR* as a teen. Once I started trying to go back and collect older zines, classic UK zines like *Final Curtain*, *Raising Hell*, and *...Years On* had an impact on me, too. My current goal is to make *General Speech* half as good and good-looking as *Final Curtain* was.

MRR; Why still do a fanzine in 2016? Are there things you can do with a fanzine that are impossible with internet communication / writing?
I have the romantic notion that maybe people will find some kind of value in my zines. I think the internet, and particularly social networking sites and message boards, serve many of the functions zines served in the past. As much as I don't like to admit that, it's definitely true. But I think making and reading fanzines is fun and cheap to do, so why not do it? I don't think zines will ever die. At least I hope they don't! I look at them all the time when I'm looking for info. Like with the bands I am most drawn to, I also feel a strong personal connection with my favorite zines. I don't think that's as possible on the internet.

MRR: What's the idea behind the *Hardcore Anachronistic Assembly* collection zines?
With the omnibus, I wanted to bring together people that I felt had interesting things to say. Everyone got four pages to fill in the zine with whatever they wanted. I asked specific people because I wanted it to be diverse and have a "world" feel to it—people like Teo Hernández from Spain from *Eskupe Al Alkalde* fanzine, Tony Gunnarsson, who used to contribute to *MRR* and did *More Noize*, Remi From *Hondartzako Hondakinak*, Zach from *Your War*, Jim from *Radiation Sickness*, So from the Hardcore Survives label in Japan, Rafael from Fracaso and Pura Mania, Sam from *Got Myself* and Feel It distro, and Shiva from *Accept The Darkness*. I had no idea what the content would be like in advance, and there was everything from band interviews to comics to articles on movies. We collectively sold 400–500 of them. I like the idea that so many people could get exposure to all these scenes and writers in one place. I'm doing another one this year.

MRR: You live in Lexington, Kentucky, right? Is that where you grew up? What's the scene like there? Seems like it'd be particularly hard to get into, like, Psycho Sin as a kid in Lexington…but maybe that's just my own bias leading me to make assumptions?
I grew up in Kentucky for the most part. I lived in southern California twice and was exposed to stuff there like the Ramones, Misfits, Sex Pistols, Suicidal Tendencies. When I moved back to Lexington, I was handed a punk flier on the very first day and have stayed into it ever since. First off, Lexington used to have a great record store in the '80s and '90s called Cut Corner that stocked punk imports, so when I moved here, decent used stuff was popping up every once and a while. The scene used to be quite a lot bigger than it is now. It would take forever to explain the history of the scene here, but Lexington is a college town, so you constantly have kids moving on to other things. Combine that with the fact that some people who really carried the scene on their backs have passed away or moved, and the scene has gotten much smaller. But we have a few local bands, and shows have been well attended for the last couple years, so I think that things are on the upswing. In Lexington, the cost of living is relatively low. It's gone up, but for the most part it's very cheap, and it's easy to find a job, so I'm surprised more punks aren't here. The scene is friendly and supportive.

Getting into music wasn't too hard since I'm young enough to have had access to websites like Kill from The Heart. On one of my first trips to the record store here, I bought the *P.E.A.C.E.* double LP compilation because it had Crass and Dead Kennedys and I liked those bands. Luckily, my copy came with the booklet, which blew my mind. I must have spent two hours of every day in high school using the computer to read Kill from the Heart after falling in love with all those international bands I'd heard on that record.

MRR: It's cool that you got into the records *and* the zine with that comp.
A lot of people forget, I think, that the first ten pages to the booklet of the *P.E.A.C.E.* comp were all about political awareness; that definitely made an impact on me.

MRR: Tell me a bit about your label. How do you decide what to release? What are you most excited about having released? Do you mostly do reissues?
I don't really have any rhyme or reason with the label. I mostly do reissues, but I've also done records for current bands, like Confront, Aborticidio, and Soul Craft. I thought, "Well, if I don't do these records for Confront or Aborticidio, the tracks may just end up on a tape or something." I thought they were good enough for vinyl and that not too many other labels would offer.

MRR: Wanna tell people what new and old shit you've been really excited about listening to lately?
My favorite new bands include Pig DNA and Wild Mohicans. The new Vaaska LP is amazing; they are truly harnessing the power of *Hear Nothing See Nothing Say Nothing* on that record. So many "D-beat" bands don't really bring out all of the elements on that record well, especially stuff like guitar solos. The new Kieltolaki LP is amazing, and the new Hard Skin single is my favorite since "Make My Tea." I listen to the same old stuff all the time—'70s and '80s UK punk, '80s USHC. I listen to live Confuse recordings on a weekly basis.

MRR: Do you care about noise that is not punk? Or raw music outside of a punk context?
I love the Shaggs, some '60s garage stuff, some rock'n'roll, and a lot of noisecore. I like some bad metal, too, particularly South American bands like Graff Spee, Hadez, Parabellum, Necrobutcher, etc. It killed me to read in the Necrobutcher reissue LP booklet how they had gotten all the Hellsaw demos, and I still only have one!

MRR: That's the kind of thing that keeps you up at night?
It does!

MRR: Can you tell us what to expect from *General Speech* in 2016 and beyond? Any message you want to share with the world?
I've got some plans for the label but none solidified enough yet to mention. Hopefully two new zine issues this year. Check out my wantlist on generalspeech.com or in the back of any issue of *General Speech* if you want to see the stuff keeping me from sleeping at night. If you are in a hardcore or punk band and want to play in Lexington, KY, give me a shout.

generalspeech.com
generalspeech.storenvy.com

FLUKE

Fluke fanzine is one of the few zines that appeared in the beginning of the '90s to still be in print, with a layout making you feel you just dug out a zine from that time period. Matthew's life has gone through a lot of ups and downs during the past 25 years, but Fluke has always been a positive outlet. This summer marks the 25th anniversary of his zine and we took this opportunity to look back on the way Fluke started as a collaborative work with Steve Schmidt and Jason White to the way it has evolved and his aim to continue publishing.

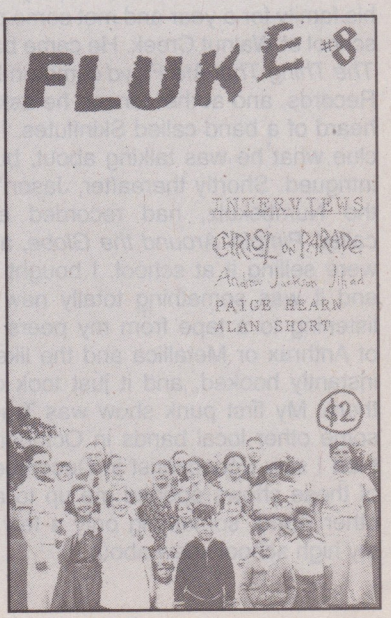
Interview and introduction by Steph Rad Party. Photos provided by Jessica Alexander.

MRR: As surprising as it may seem, I discovered the existence of your zine nearly one year ago by way of your Tumblr page despite the fact that it started in 1991. Has your zine been printed on a regular basis since 1991? Or was it put on hold for a long time, then back again in print?

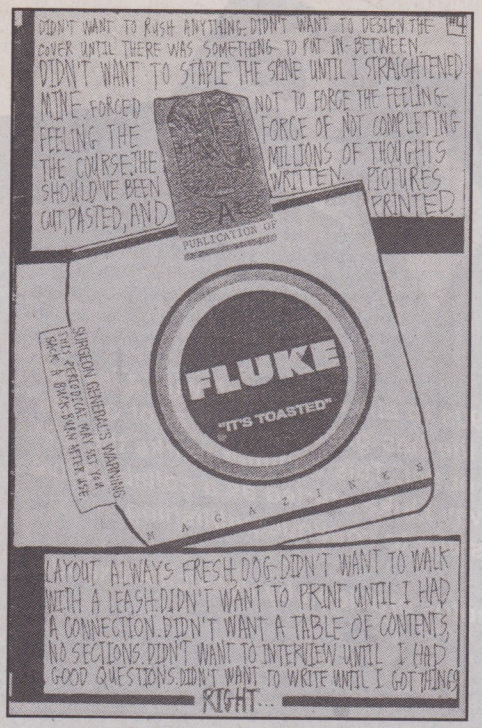
It's been off and on since the summer of 1991 when Steve Schmidt, Jason White, and I collaborated on Issue One in North Little Rock, Arkansas. Issue Two came out the following year. Steve and Jason began focusing more on their band Chino Horde, so I took on the magazine myself. Issue Three was published in 1993 and Issue Four in 1995 after I moved to Seattle. I got strung out on drugs a few years later and somehow, by the skin of my teeth, was able to release Issue Five in 1998. The last of the copy shop scams, the corner of Broadway and Denny Way on Capitol Hill. My life was consumed by drugs for years, so I wasn't able to do much of anything other than finding ways and means to support my habit. It was a very dark time in my life, and I feel very fortunate to be here, honestly. I moved to Phoenix in 2000 to try and get clean, which I finally did the next year. It took years to get my life back in some semblance of order. I published Issue Six in 2005, and I felt like it totally flopped. A few people seemed to like it, but in general it got a cold response. I published Issue Seven in 2009, and I've done one annually ever since save for 2014. My latest issue came out in May 2015, and I'm working on the 25th anniversary issue for 2016.

MRR: There's a very '90s feel in your zine, both in the way you conduct your interviews and its layout. What has motivated you in the first place to do a zine? Any other zines that really inspired you?

Jason and I took journalism together at Northeast High, and I had an English teacher who really encouraged me. The initial motivation for doing *Fluke* was to be a part of something in the Little Rock punk scene in the early '90s. The three of us were best friends who skated and went to shows together, so it just made sense to do the magazine together. Mark Dober was publishing a Little Rock fanzine, which was very inspiring to me. There were a few late '80s Little Rock fanzines—Tim Lamb's *Lighten Up* as well as Matt Besser and Bobby Matthews' *Barking at Life*—that I didn't know much about because it was just before my time but knowing that they existed was inspiring to me. *Lighten Up* was a very informative publication back when fanzines were crucial in spreading the word on bands, records, fanzines, and other scenes across the country. Jason interviewed Tim for our first issue. *Cometbus* issue 24 was published in 1990, and that was a huge influence on us. We were fans of Crimpshrine, and discovering Aaron's fanzine was pivotal for me personally. Steve was going to do a fanzine called *Plaid*; he conducted interviews with Fugazi and Plaid Retina as they came through town. *Plaid* never happened, so those interviews went into our first issue of *Fluke*. We felt our first issue was strong, and we were confident going forward.



MRR: Doing a zine nowadays is a real labor of love. What motivates you to still do a zine in 2016? Is it for the same reasons you started it in 1991?



My fanzine keeps me connected to people. It gives me an outlet and a hobby. It's my contribution to punk, to give back. It is fun to create something and share it with others. So yes, it is for the same reasons as when we started in 1991. I haven't even thought of that until now, and it is refreshing to look at it and realize it's still for the same reasons as when we started.

MRR: What attracted you to the punk scene in the first place, and how did you discover it?

I was dabbling in punk a little in 1987 but nothing more than buying a Sex Pistols tape or two from the music store at the mall. I was skateboarding around the neighborhood and in the beginning of 1988 I met Jason. I don't remember seeing him again until a year later at a Metallica concert. He had moved to the Bay Area with his family for a year and met some punks in school at Walnut Creek. He came back with *The Thing That Ate Floyd* comp on Lookout Records, and at the concert he asked if I'd heard of a band called Skinflutes. I had no clue what he was talking about, but I was intrigued. Shortly thereafter, Jason's band, the Numbskulz, had recorded a demo called *Pimpin' Around the Globe,* and they were selling it at school. I bought a copy, and it was something totally new to me, listening to a tape from my peers instead of Anthrax or Metallica and the like. I was instantly hooked, and it just took off from there. My first punk show was Trusty and some other local bands in October of '89, then I saw Econochrist in December. Both of those shows opened me up to a whole other world, something only a few kids in my high school knew about.

MRR: According to the pictures you post on your Tumblr, you seem to have a large taste in music—'80s hip-hop, metal, pop punk, pop music, emo, and hardcore. Was it something you already assumed at the beginning of your zine, or is it something you feel more comfortable now with time and age?

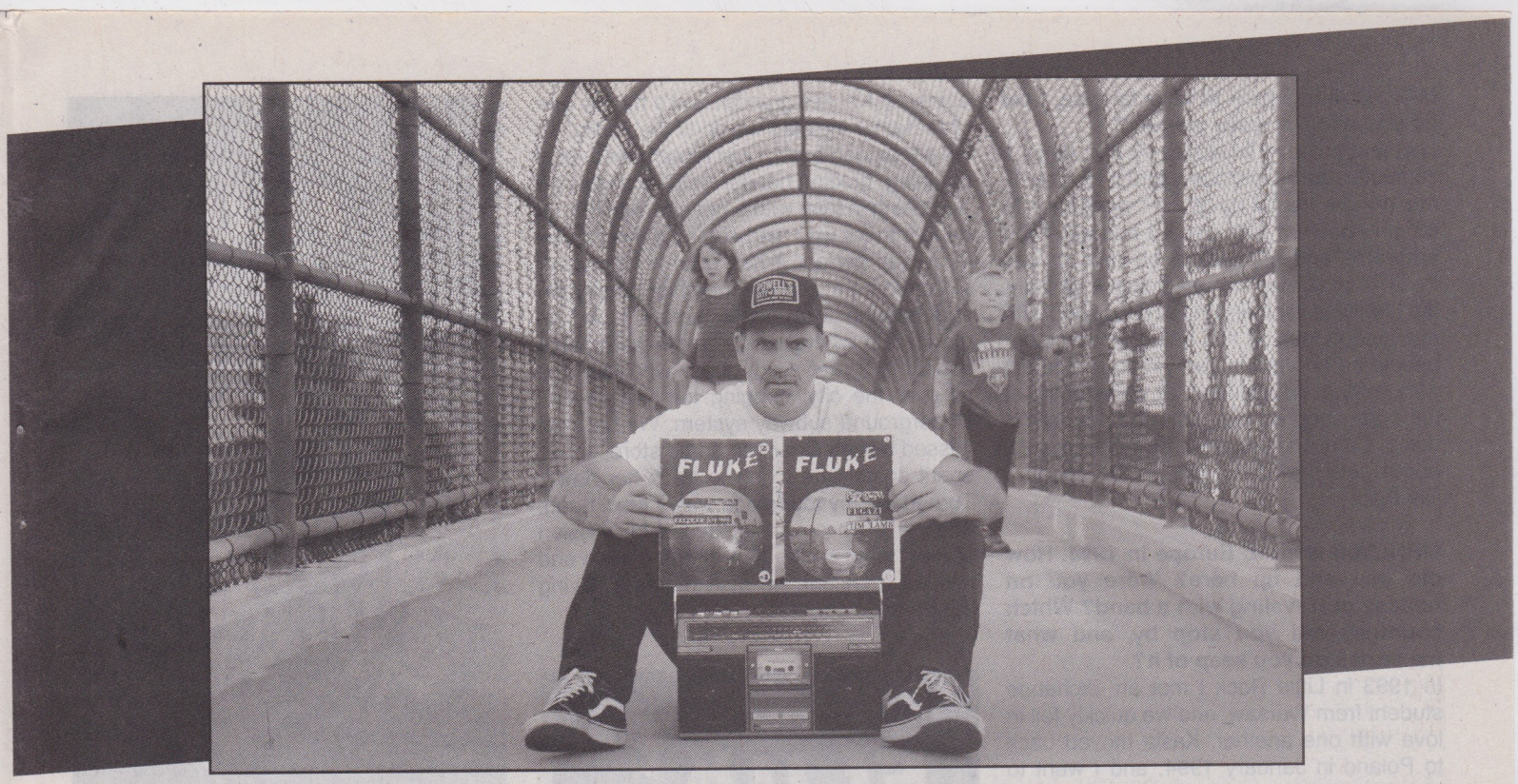
The fanzine concentrated heavily on punk, although we also had hip-hop record reviews since we were big fans of that genre as well. To us, we saw hip-hop as punk rock, really. Only the beat and demographic were different. Both were honest, in your face, youthful rebellion. Public Enemy and Boogie Down Productions were punk! Not to take away from their true genre of hip hop, which has an incredibly rich history and culture. As for the other genres of my interest, once I discovered punk, I definitely closed myself off to anything outside of that and hip hop for a good number of years. It took me a few years to come back to listening to thrash,

rock'n'roll, and so forth on a serious level. I was pretty close-minded musically for a few years, but I was so into punk rock that it didn't matter what else was going on.

MRR: You seem to put your tag regularly on trains. Were you into graffiti and tagging buildings in the past and maybe more into hip-hop before discovering punk rock? What was your musical background?

The day after I graduated high school in 1990, my mother, brother, and I moved to Chicago. I met a group of skaters downtown, some of whom I'm still friends with today. They were in a graffiti crew called J4F (Just For Fun) and were tagging throughout the city. There were a lot of other crews—BTB (Born To Bomb) and DAD (Down And Dirty) come to mind. I started tagging "Fluke" on walls in Chicago and back home in Little Rock, as I was visiting often. A whole lot of punk kids in Little Rock were tagging, too.

As for musical background, my mother listened to a lot of Motown, Stevie Wonder, Michael Jackson, Diana Ross and the like. In 1980 and 1981 she bought my brother and me Sugarhill Gang's *Rapper's Delight* and Frankie Smith's *Double Dutch Bus* records. We had a van that we called the "Double Dutch Bus," complete with a personalized license plate on the front! That was my introduction to hip hop/rap music. We played those records over and over and over. I don't remember listening to any other hip hop until RUN-DMC released *Raising Hell* in 1986. I was listening to a lot of rock and heavy metal at that time, and their cover of "Walk This Way" brought hip hop to the mainstream thanks to Rick Rubin. 1987 had so many great hip hop albums, many that never saw radio play but plenty that did. Artists such as Dana Dane, LL Cool J, Kool Moe Dee, DJ Jazzy Jeff and The Fresh Prince, and so many others were playing on the radio on the weekends as my friends and I would be driving around town seeking adventure. That gave people from middle America a chance to hear what was coming out of the east coast. I grew up on MTV, so a year later I was watching *Yo! MTV Raps,* which brought New York City hip-hop to my living room in North Little Rock, Arkansas. Groups like Public Enemy and Boogie Down Productions completely blew my mind. I can remember seeing the "My Philosophy" video and thinking that the name Boogie Down Productions was so cool. That alone piqued my interest. It was something so new and fresh to me, and I was sold. It was on another level from the early '80s, which were mostly party records. East coast hip-hop made a huge impression, and it is still absolutely intriguing to me. In



1989, Beastie Boys' *Paul's Boutique* came out, and if there is one record that changed my life, it's that one. Hip-hop continued to grow, the '90s was the most fruitful era for the art form up to around 1996. Hip-hop was our jazz.

MRR: There are a lot of references to punk songs in your graffiti; you seem to enjoy writing on trains. Why?
Trains are mobile canvases, maximizing viewing potential. A free nationwide telegram.

MRR: Are you involved in hobo culture? Did you happen to live on the streets too or hop trains?
I'm loosely involved in that culture, only through the art. buZ blurr, who created the Colossus of Roads moniker, has become a friend of mine through the fanzine. I have been a fan of his work since I first discovered it in 1992. He is a highly intellectual man and the most important folk artist of our time, in my mind. My friend Mark Lewis interviewed him for *Fluke* #11. I have also befriended other amazing artists of that culture, most of whom prefer to remain anonymous. I've never lived on the streets, thankfully. I hopped trains one time in my life, from Chicago to Little Rock in 1992. Actually, we got as far as Chillicothe, Illinois, and hitchhiked the rest of the way. It was a blast. We were trying to get to New Orleans to see Econochrist, but we settled on stopping in Little Rock and seeing them there, which was an amazing matinee show with Paxston Quiggly and Grimple.

MRR: It was a nice surprise to see you put out a full issue with some comics from Bobby Madness. How did you get in touch with him? Did you know him from the past? Or was it he who submitted you some of his stories to put in print?
Bobby and I have never actually met; I'm hoping to meet him soon. I first discovered his art in 1990 from the cover of Crimpshrine's *Quit Talkin' Claude* EP. I have been a fan of his ever since. A few years ago we became friends through social media, and I sent him my fanzine, which he really loved. He sent some comics my way, and I proposed the idea of doing a whole issue of *Fluke* and he agreed. *Fluke* #12 is Bobby's autobiographical account of being a young teenager living on the Lower East Side of Manhattan in 1980–81. It revolves around three shows he saw at that time: Ramones, the Cramps, and Stiff Little Fingers. This issue also shows how NYC punk rock, hip hop, and street art collided and created something unique.

MRR: In the past, *Fluke* was a collaborative effort with Jason White and Steve Schmidt. Was it easier to do it with other people, or is it more flexible to run it alone now?
In the early days, none of us had ever done a magazine, so we learned together as we went. Each of us brought something to the table back then. Steve had a camera, Jason had a typewriter, I had a piece of writing and a decent photo or two from a few courses I was taking. Steve and Jason both had interviews, we all did record reviews. Jason and I learned about layout in journalism class, and we all collaborated on how it was going to look. Again, the three of us were together all of the time anyway, so there really wasn't any better way to do it than as a team. These days, I am sure it is much more flexible to do on my own. I still do the layout by hand at the copy shop and always have my two friends in mind as I'm working on an issue. I still sometimes confer with them both, which is always fun for me.

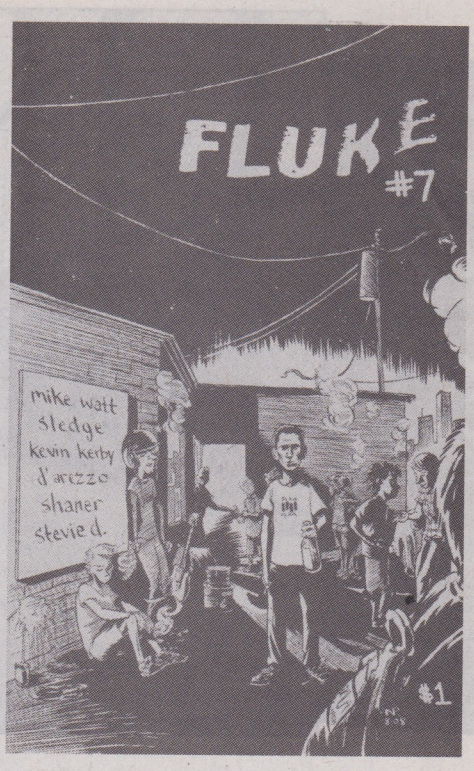
MRR: On your Tumblr I saw a lot of pictures of old issues of *Cometbus*, including some very old ones that I had never seen before when the name wasn't yet *Cometbus*. Did you buy them at the time? Was it the zine that influenced you to do *Fluke*?
I have been reading and collecting *Cometbus* since Aaron started publishing it again in 1990 with issue 24. That was most definitely a huge influence on us as we started *Fluke*. It was the first fanzine we read that focused on the lifestyle of punk, and it really showed us how punk is so much more than the music. Aaron has always been very supportive of *Fluke*, since issue #1. His writing really displayed how you can find joy in the simple things in life—whatever that may be to the individual—and that you don't really need any money to discover that. He inspired me to get out into the world and explore different places. He also showed me there doesn't have to be a plan, just wander and adventure will happen. I really loved reading about Berkeley and learning about things that happened in the East Bay in the early '80s. A lot of great bands came out of many East Bay towns, and only a fraction of them were released on labels such as Lookout and Very Small. Over the past few years I have tried getting my hands on his issues before 1990. I have a few but not many since they are pretty hard to come by.

MRR: Coming back to your fanzine, how do you work on your layouts?
I cut and paste. I did issues #7 and #8 on a computer, but it wasn't any fun! It took away much more than it gave, so I went back to cut and paste. I suppose if I had all of the programs and knowledge on how to use them, I could see myself doing it digitally, but I really enjoy being in the copy shop with my headphones on and being around other people as I do it. It's always fun to interact with random people from all walks of life at the copy shop as they ask about what I'm doing. Copy and paste is way more organic, and it gets my hands dirty, so to speak. I like that.

MRR: You went to Europe in 1994. How did you end up here? Were you on holiday or traveling with a band? Which countries did you stop by, and what memories do you keep of it?
In 1993 in Little Rock I met an exchange student from Warsaw, and we quickly fell in love with one another. Kasia moved back to Poland in January 1994, and I went to visit her for six weeks in the Fall. It was exhilarating, to say the least, as we fell in love all over again. Also being in Europe for the first time was incredible. We took a train to Krakow and saw the stained glass at Saint Mary's Basilica, built in the 12th century. There are so many wonderful memories from that trip; it was sensory overload in the best of ways. Walking in the rose garden at Wilanow Palace in Warsaw. Buying a pocket watch off a street vendor, despite Kasia's disapproval. "It'll be dead in three days." She was right. Another great memory is of my friend Bryan Spinas being in Warsaw at the same time and he joining us for a family dinner at Kasia's grandparent's house. Her grandfather insisted we drink the vodka, so we got a good buzz. I just remember a lot of laughing, holding hands, walking endlessly, and being in love with a girl and with life. To be fair, there was also some fighting mixed in. It was perfect. I had a 24-hour layover in London. I found an anarchist bookstore, and through the people there I found an old church where punks and hippies were squatting. I met a guy there who took me all over the city, hopping turnstiles in the Underground subway system. We had just missed Neneh Cherry in some store, so we spent some time trying to track her down. Turned out my tour guide was a crackhead, and we were on an unsuccessful mission of his. I slept on the floor of the church and missed my flight the next morning. Living the dream.

MRR: You also traveled in Canada with 8 Bark. Were you playing in the band or just traveling with them selling merch?
I roadied for 8 Bark. We did a two-week tour of Eastern Canada in January of 1992. I drove, took photos, loaded/unloaded the van, sold merchandise, and smoked hash. Not necessarily in that order. I'm still good friends with Steve and Victoria, who ended up getting married and having two kids, who are wonderful. Brian went missing for seven years and has since been diagnosed schizophrenic. He lives in Madison, Wisconsin, where both Steve Schmidt and Sackett and I visited with him back in 2008. Doug is still playing and recording music and has taken up wood-working. My memories with 8 Bark are some of the best of my life.

MRR: You were also in a band called Jetjangua. How long did it last? Did you put out records with them and go on tour? Any other bands you played in?



I was the weak link in Jetjangua—I didn't really know how to play bass, but when I moved back to Little Rock from Chicago, I really wanted to be in a band with Steve Schmidt, who played guitar. It was John Pugh's first band; he wrote lengthy manifestos that he passed out and read at our shows. Burt Taggart was on drums. We recorded a demo, that's as far as we got before Steve and Burt took off for the Chino Horde tour in the summer of 1993. That was the beginning and end of my punk band tenure. A highlight was opening the Governor's Mansion show, an all-day punk show for the new governor's daughter's birthday party. Nuisance was on tour and played the night before. We asked if they'd like to headline the Governor's Mansion show the next day and they did!

MRR: What are your projects right now with *Fluke*? I've seen that you're working on an article about Trusty.
I have a few issues in the developmental stages. Summer 2016 is the 25th anniversary, so I plan to do something special for that. Trusty was a band that really solidified the Little Rock punk scene in the early '90s. They played so many shows and really supported and encouraged the younger bands that were opening for them. Little Rock wouldn't have become the fertile music scene it was without Trusty. They moved to DC in 1992 and released a few albums on Dischord Records. As Jason White once said, "Where would we be without Trusty?"

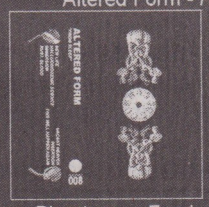
For more information on Fluke *see fluke-fanzine.tumblr.com. Write to Matthew at PO Box 1547, Pheonix, AZ 85001.*

Anthems of The Undesirable
Outsider Music for Elitists

Swallowing - *Songs For The Saved* CS

Filthy, hypnotizing, misanthropic dirge from the UK. US repress of the sold out demo. Ltd. to 100.

Altered Form - *From Sleep* CS



Dreamy, haunting, minimal synth. Recorded at home (with no overdubs) in Richmond, VA.

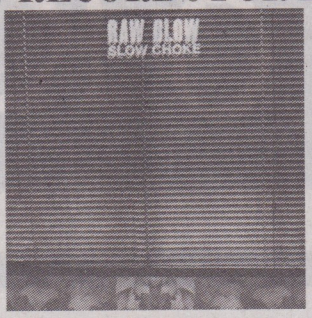
Mere Phantoms - *Famine For A Slow Death* 12"

Griding, noisy, political hardcore from Pittsburgh. Featuring electronics by Nyodene D.

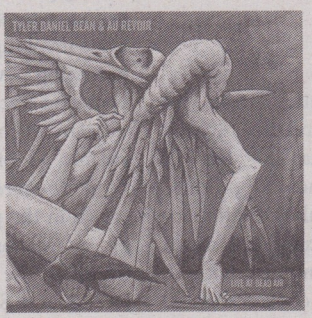
Next:
Romannis Mötte – *Time Sequences* CS/LP
Left Cross CS

www.theundesirable.net
anthems@theundesirable.net

NEW RECORDS FOR 2016



RAW BLOW - Slow Choke 7"



TYLER DANIEL BEAN/AU REVOIR
Live At Dead Air split 7"

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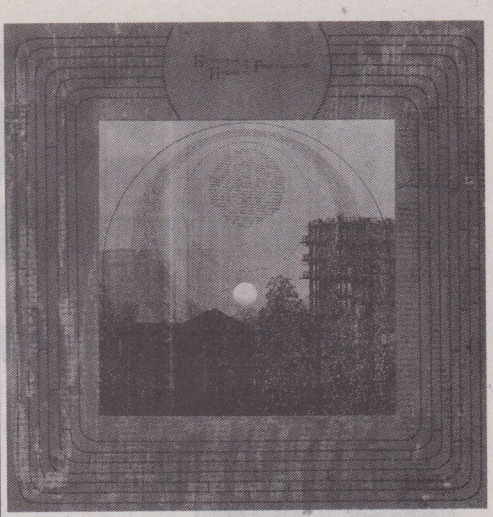

Estrogen Highs / Frustrations
Split 12" Out Now!

The last of the Estrogen Highs recorded material comes to light and shares some wax with shred-heavy punks, Frustrations, from Detroit.

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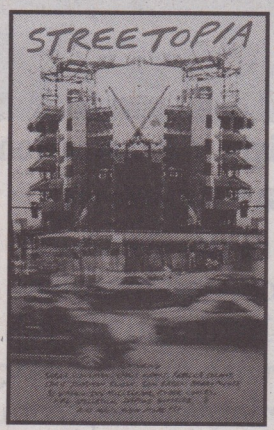


Streetopia
Edited by Erick Lyle
Brooklyn
$20.00 | 320 pgs

In 1974, Jacques Camatte wrote his vitriolic anti-civilization treatise, *Against Domestication*. "Capital has no fear of utopias, since it even tends to produce them." While this heretical revolutionary Marxist has some weird hang-ups about essentializing innocence and the natural, his observations about the crisis fomented by Capital only securing Capital's power seem eerily psychic even if you believe in history.

In 2012, following and syncing with some of the remnants of the international Occupy Movement of the year previous, Erick Lyle, Chris Johanson, and Kal Spelletich curated a six-week long arts festival that imagined a better San Francisco. Along with a buttload of volunteers, artists, and volunteer artists, *Streetopia* thrived in downtown San Francisco's Luggage Store Gallery and its sister space, The Tenderloin National Forest. There were daily events like the Free Cafe and special one night punk shows, 24-hour film showings, and readings.

Certainly, the idea of an alternative to life in the shit pile has long inspired us. From Hieronymus Bosch to Leonora Carrington to Sun Ra, artists have long represented hopeful versions of human life. From speculative fiction to the Whole Earth Catalog, the idea that we can enact change by simply imagining it holds a powerful weight in the human consciousness.

Streetopia the book presents us with a peek into the process. It is a scrapbook of memories and moments. Editor Erick Lyle, of *SCAM* fanzine, starts off the book with an introduction that situates the project somewhat historically and geographically. If you are a fan of his work, this brand of urban nostalgia will be very familiar. If not, you probably still know what I'm talking about. The need to seek the freaks leaves most of us wondering about and looking for a similar form in history in order to validate our lives, which are sometimes (depending on who you are) marginalized and therefore mysterious.

Lyle's essay "The Future of Nowhere" is perhaps the longest piece of the writing in the book and expands on his introduction with an overwhelming amount of information. Pulling from San Francisco's history as far back as the gold rush and using the visions of dystopian novels as analogies to modern life, Lyle crafts a compelling reminder that your daily hell is someone else's utopia. Lyle recounts his lived experience in SROs off Market Street as well as history he's forced to imagine as a student of popular movements.

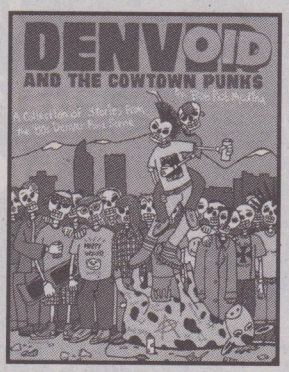
Of course San Francisco isn't the only place changing because of the articulated wealth of the tech industry and the young professional's desire for urban *redensification*. Notable out-of-towners Chris Kraus and Sarah Shulman weigh in on how the dearth of affordable real estate harms a city's cultural opportunities with essays of their own. For a more local flavor, there are plenty of pieces from friends in and of San Francisco who have graced the pages of this magazine more than a few times: Mission Mini-Comix, Ivy Jeanne, Rebecca Solnit, V. Vale, and Sy Wagon.

It interests me to note that two of the curators of the show no longer live in the city they so boldly celebrated. It seems possible that to them the celebration was something more like a funeral. Gentrification is a never-ending process. It's a slow animosity that uses violence as well as an eerie patience to strategically displace and disenfranchise. To borrow from Lyle's invoking of Jose Esteban Munoz's definition of utopia—a "process of becoming"—we could certainly say the same thing of our imagined utopia's opposing force.

Many of the writings in the book focus on the strong ethic of mutual aid and use of public space as guiding much of the work produced for the show. The serene scenes imagined for publically installed murals were a far cry from the police riots happening across the Bay with almost regularity just a few months before *Streetopia* opened. Indeed, just two weeks before the show, the Mission Police station, as well as many businesses and cars on Valencia Street, were vandalized and broken by protesters airing their grievances with austerity and lack in the face of racist control and the ostentatious wealth that facilitates it. I often wonder why these modes of resisting seem gauche to most people without the soft lighting of historical nostalgia granted to the baroque revolutionary violence of the social movements of the '60s, for instance.

We don't often interrogate our reasons for imagining other ways of living. It's possible that like most creative endeavors, a utopian imagining could be the result of capital again making moves to co opt and utilize all labor for its own ends. It's 2016 in San Francisco, Ed Lee is the mayor for real, and someone stole the SF Drug User's Union's sign designed and painted by world famous artist Barry McGee as a part of the *Streetopia* show. Still, several years down the line, life in The Bay still persists. You can still buy drugs on the street almost anywhere, you can see a punk show in a cave, and all those techies could just be sugar daddies waiting to give. After all, canaries are always behind bars.

—E. Conner



Denvoid and the Cowtown Punks
Bob Rob Medina
Robot Enemy Publications
$24.99 | 228 pages

If you're into punk and you like reading about punk (oh and you do, dear reader, you do), then I bet it's well trod territory to turn the pages of books about the rise of punk in places like New York, London, Los Angeles, or San Francisco. That stuff is well documented, but what about the smaller cities, the places that don't get much attention but felt the revolution of possibilities that is punk? Bob Rob Medina's *Denvoid and the Cowtown Punks* is, in that vein, a labor of love, capturing the creation and proliferation of punk and hardcore in the 1980s in Denver through interviews, flyers, art, and much personal rumination.

Just from an initial flip through, one can see that the construction of this book has gone through a lot of dedication and careful consideration. Each page has the text overlaid on overblown photos or blocked around show flyers (many of which are really funny and/or amazing pieces of art that I'm glad some folks had the foresight to hold onto), and Medina makes the interesting choice to include brush and ink renditions of photographs with every interview. In truth, there are relatively few actual photos—something

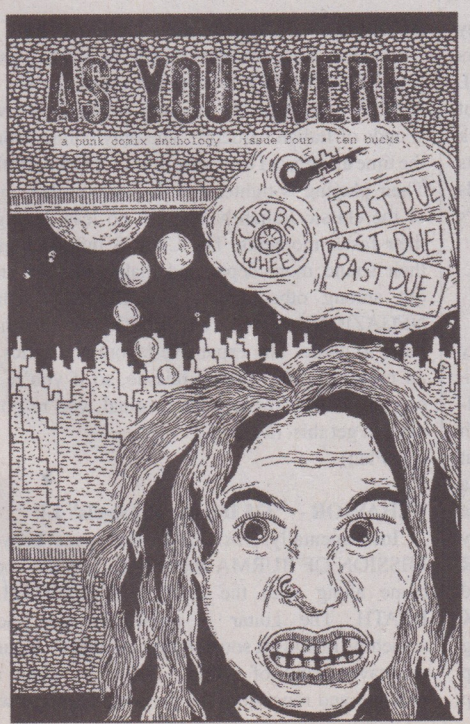
that I began to note the further along I read because I wanted more of a chance to visualize the people talked about. That said, the art is really moving, both in its consistent quality and in the choice of the author to spend so much time making brush and ink artwork based on photographs rather than just taking the quick way out of printing photographs. I was fascinated by the artwork even before I began to read the text. Though, sadly, the front cover is perhaps one of the least interesting pieces of art Medina includes.

Medina's opening piece about how he got into punk and his time in bands is the kind of recollection of punk changing a life that will likely strike a chord with readers of this magazine for freaks. More interesting, perhaps, is that in the sea of books about punk written by white people, Medina brings the focus early on to his experience of being a Latino person in a largely white punk scene even as that scene interacts with communities of color in Denver. Against all of this is the looming backdrop of Reagan's America, seething discontent, and living in a city that seems to bring together artsy weirdos and cowtown hicks. We get, as we must when reading interviews with folks talking about things that happened around 30 years ago, the perspective of age and experience. Long after the bands broke up or the venues closed or the beefs were squashed, the people interviewed have a clear affection for their time in the punk world of Denver (some are still in it now). There are tender but honest reminiscence about Wax Trax (the record store that seemed to be an epicenter for the Denver punks then), critical if short-lived venues (Kennedy's Warehouse and the Packinghouse stand out), and of course the bands that really shaped the scene. The Frantix, the Lepers, the Rok Tots, and Bum Kon all came up again and again as bands that got many a young punk to make the move from slam dancing in the pit to shredding in front of it. Since the interviews often covered the same time periods and bands, and it did become a bit of an overwhelming wash of names and bands after a while. I definitely looked at the chart of bands and band members in the back for reference at many points.

Many folks that didn't play music but were key in making things come together get great respect and coverage here, from space creator/promoter Nancy Kennedy to radio hosts and zine makers to a thoughtful remembrance of Phil the Fan. To give fair warning, there is a lot of that maybe true but just as often as not condescending talk about how things were before the internet and how much more welcoming the punk world was "back then" (a comfortable and popular idea to posit in the creation of history). I am surprised how Medina arranged the interviews so that the Shawn Slater of the Denver Skins gets one of the parting shots and goes out talking about the need to eventually conform to things in society. Sure, Slater's life experiences are much greater than just being a young skinhead in Denver, but the placement of his interview near the end of the book and the looming presence of the skinheads in previous interviews (especially when people talk about things that hurt the punk/hardcore scene or drove folks away) is an interesting choice given the strong sense of camaraderie, support, and inspiration that seems to be the take away from much of the rest of the book. Then again, letting folks say what they want about their experiences is the strength of this book. You get different Denvers in here, overlapping and full of common things but different nonetheless. Those seeking a straight up narrative of the history of hardcore and punk in Denver might be disappointed. The strength of this book is that, after beginning each piece with his own reflections, Medina lets people tell their own stories, be they inspiring, funny, sad, or just introspective, and from there we really get what people were trying to do down in Denver in the '80s and what they think of it now. That perspective of decades of time can make things a little foggy on details sometimes but provides a level of thoughtfulness I found charming in this work. This is the kind of history of punk—still positive and supportive but tempered with time and perspective—that I find fascinating. Pick it up if you're ruminating over scene politics you went through years ago, or if you are just into Denver or if you just like a bunch of short, interesting stories from people's lives. Or if you just like good-looking punk related art.

—Kenn Suto

New comix from Silver Sprocket



The comic **GOODBYE** by **BEN PASSMORE** is comprised of three vignettes: A myth about polyamory, a parable about real punks, and an argument for aging gracefully/ killing yourself.
88 pages, 4 x 5.5 inches

AS YOU WERE, 4: LIVING SITUATIONS
New, provocative, and funny stories by comic artists from punk scenes all over the world. This volume deals with Living Situations; roomies, housemates, landlords, house guests, enemies, frenemies, house-shows, vibes, rats & garbage!

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RECORDS

Send **two** copies of vinyl or CD-only releases (if on both formats, please send the vinyl) to **MRR, PO Box 460760, SF, CA 94146, USA**
We will review everything that falls within our area of coverage: punk, garage, hardcore, etc.—no major labels or labels distributed by major-affiliated distros. Releases without vocals or drums will not be considered. Please include postpaid price and contact information. Let us know where your band is from! *No reviews of test pressings or promo CDs without final artwork.*

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(BA) Mike Battleaxe
(BW) Brendan Wells
(CK) Carolyn Keddy
(CS) Chris Hubbard
(DB) Daniel Becker
(DG) Dan Goetz
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(RL) Ray Lujan
(RW) Ryan Wells
(RO) Rotten Ron Ready
(WB) Will Blomquist
(WN) Robert Collins

AEROSOL BURNS – "Afraid of the Phone/(Your Love Is) Where I Go"

This is on Pogo Time Records. I had a feeling I was going to love it. I was right. Mid-tempo and super melodic, this is power pop music with a grainy edge to it. You need this record, but it looks like it's limited to 250 copies. If you get your copy before I get mine, I will kick your ass. (KK)
(Pogo Time)

ANGRY COUGARS – LP

Ms. Machete and Co are back with a full-length and a much more full and realized effort than their previous EP. Not sure if Betty's name was dropped permanently or just to strip things down for this release but stripped down and mean describe this record appropriately—much harder and angrier this time around. There's a strong 7 YEAR BITCH / NASHVILLE PUSSY metallic rage going on with a hint of MOUNTAIN. My main complaint is that they etched the spaces in between songs on the vinyl—it looks pretty but energy is lost in the awkward gaps left behind! Otherwise, good job. (RO)
(Break Up)

ANSTALT – "Ashes to Ashes" EP

Four songs of meaty hardcore. Familiar sound and familiar riffs that can feel comfortable if you let it. The only redeeming reason for a song like ANSTALT's "Jailbait" to exist in 2016 is the unintended humor in their German accents singing "*YAIL-bait*." (AM)
(De:Nihil / Farewell / Pain of Mind)

ANSTALT – "Austrian Wino" EP

Slick, rollicking, party-punk-hardcore'n'roll that falls somewhere in between TURBONEGRO and UNCURBED. Big recording (that works with these type of tunes), solos, and plenty or energy make for a good listen if you are looking for a real cool time. Five originals and of cover of the CHAOS classic "Get Out of My Pocket." (JU)
(Audio Liberation Organisation)

ANSTALT – "Outpunking the Punks" LP

This is a compilation of the first four EPs by a Viennese band I'm not at all familiar with. If you like this band at all you will be stoked. There are so, so...sooo many songs on here. They play fast, heavy-fisted, beer drinking punk that's a combination of DISCHARGE, TURBONEGRO, and the DICTATORS. They do the most hilarious WIPERS cover ever. Zzzzzzz. (RO)
(Farewell / Audio Liberation Organisation)

ANTIBODIES – "Happy New Year Zero" CD

Debut self-released / self-produced effort from this Brit trio. Judging from the balding pate of the drummer (incongruously named Warlock, which sounds more like he should be drumming for MARILLION, surely), these chaps have been around for a while. Despite—or perhaps because of—their advancing years (or receding hairlines), they nevertheless produce an infectious brace of '77 influenced punk. Think the DRONES and EATER, and throw in a punker PETER TOSH effort, and well, there you have it. (RK)
(BinsTwins)

BACKSLIDER – "Motherfucker" LP

These motherfuckers deliver a furious yet hazy hardcore ripper. Makes me want to smoke jammers in the middle of a rockslide. Sounds like BRAINOIL and *Scum*-era NAPALM DEATH hashing things out in the pit. Their riffs give even the finest stoner rock bands a run for their money, but it's the blast beats that send me to the moon. The last song sounds like some kind of grindcore outtake from SLEEP's *Dopesmoker*. Motherfucking sick! (BA)
(Six Weeks)

BAD INDIANS / MILK DICK – split EP

This one is for the garage rockers and hits every button. The BAD INDIANS are from Ypsilanti, Michigan, and their songs on this split are well-crafted pop with a strong psych vibe filtered through peppy garage. The first song is a bouncy jam that doesn't make me feel embarrassed to enjoy a garage rock song—it isn't trying *too* hard to be a fun track, it just is. The music sounds intentionally sped up in a trippy way and hints at the 13th FLOOR ELEVATORS. The second one is a little heavier and with a lead drawl that reminds me of the BLACK LIPS and makes me want to shake my freaky long hair. MILK DICK play three bedroom / garage / pop / twee downers that do something like naïve pop singers JONATHAN RICHMAN and the VIOLENT FEMMES playing girl group ballads, but there's also a very heavy hint at a PAVEMENT obsession in the sulking undertones that has me putting them on repeat. This label sent in a bunch of different stuff this month, and now I want to hear all of it. (BW)
(Glad Fact)

BANHOF – "February 82" EP

This Italian band existed from 1979-84, sadly breaking up after a motorcycle accident paralyzed the singer. Their legacy was a four-song tape released in 1982 and now committed to vinyl for posterity. It's decent, catchy punk on par with any second tier band from the era. The title track is the standout: an anthemic screed about the negative effects of heroin on the punk scene. Good stuff, shame it had to end so abruptly for them. The good news (according to the liner notes) is the singer eventually overcame his disability. (AM)
(No Plan)

BEDBOYS – "L'Indifferenza Uccide..." EP

Another long-overdue reissue of a rare classic! The BEDBOYS EP is a perfect blend of '80s UK anarcho punk and the uniquely scrappy and wild sounds of Italian hardcore. The only comparison of the time and place I can think of is CONTRAZIONE. Their playing is tighter and less frantic than many of the classic Italian bands, but no less flailing in their faster moments. The CRASS influence gives their sound more depth and makes this EP stand out among other greats like BLOODY RIOT, NEGAZIONE, KINA, DECLINO, and too many more to name. The expansive layout and lyrics are all present in this quality reissue, so if you're not concerned with owning the original, you're gonna need to get this. (MA)
(No Plan)

BEHAVIOR – "375 Images of Angels" LP

Instrumentally, this fills in the space between MISSION OF BURMA and SLINT, and the vocals come along with the stylings of CHRISTIAN DEATH. The guitar is mind-blowingly clean, somehow making it sound either incredibly accurate or maybe kind of wimpy. There is space and restraint and repetition; the parts that seem to want

to be improvised or unhinged sound calculated. Freaky drum machine / drums jam mid-record. (MM)
(Iron Lung)

BEROSSZULAS – "Roncs Test" EP

OK, so you know what USHC sounds like in 2016, right? Well, this sounds like that, except this is from Budapest. Blown-out, everything in the red recording: check. Knuckle-dragging, mid-tempo pounding: check. 1-2-1-2 fast street section: check. Blast beat section: check. Wait, that doesn't really make much sense, but...Mystery solved regarding the WHITE WARDS LP leak in Hungary a few years back. Either way, these guys thank Fred Durst on their Bandcamp page. Perhaps this is a joke, no? (JK)
(Pizza Dayz)

THE BESMIRCHERS – "Hard On Love" EP

The record label wrote to us to reassure us that these guys are not Nazis...just scum punks. The labels of "sexist" and "homophobe" are still on the table, though. What the fuck ever. The BESMIRCHERS are probably thinking that they're gonna offend the sensibilities of the PC police at this magazine, but they're not. These guys sound like a second-rate cross between CANDY SNATCHERS and the MEATMEN, but somehow goofier. They sing about molesting women in vans, sex, Hitler, and more fucking. Seriously, whatever. The singer is pictured with a bloody head and face tattoos, so he probably doesn't (and shouldn't) give a fuck what I say. (GH)
(Slope)

BIG BILL – "Weird Walk/Mainly Manly"

Fuck Yes! Weird as hell, quirky-ass rock! The first song starts off super mellow mellow and clean, but turns right up my alley PDQ with nerdy alien falsetto and a stoned as hell surfy feel. It's going to be hard for me to not make a DICKIES reference. Fans of weirdos like that, as well as ALICE DONUT, BENTON AND THE BENTONITES, or even SPOT 1019 should prick up your plastic Spock ears and find this shit pronto. Each song also has a perfectly executed "party track"! This weird shit is on repeat LAMF over here. (DZ)
(Austin Town Hall)

BLODAD TAND – "Control Alt Delete" EP

Swedish punk with plenty of spunk that I think suffers from a clean recording. Everything sounds flat and compressed to the max! The songs are well written, and the energy is there—the production just restrains it. Wild yells and rhythmic hooks (think TRISTESS) are enough to get my attention, but just imagine the impact this thing would make if it sounded more out-of-control. (MA)
(Dirt Cult / Suicide)

BLOOD PRESSURE – "Need to Control" LP

It doesn't get much better than this BLOOD PRESSURE LP. Show me another band that can combine the classic tried and true sounds of 1980s Scandinavian and American hardcore theatres and sounds this fresh, pissed, original, and convincing. I dare you. (JU)
(Beach Impediment / Even Worse / Way Back When)

BOMBAY HARAMBEE – "Goldmine" LP

This is a strange one. It's pretty much just a rock record. Like an '80s college rock record. Or a '90s radio rock record. Or is that just the same thing? At their best, they have catchy, sort of poppy but also driving songs that sound somewhat like the THERMALS (especially with that vocal style) or the VOLCANO SUNS. At their worst, there is a good amount of poorly done guitar shredding over mid-tempo rock songs. In the middle, it sounds like the TRAGICALLY HIP or some early R.E.M. inspired stuff. (PA)
(Max Recordings)

BOSS EYE – "Plays Cottage Vortex" LP

Here's a test case for the prospective psychoanalyst out there in recordlandia: what's your diagnosis on a record where the A-side is a sort of plodding paean to the duller side of mid-'90s repeat-a-riff, distantly metallic post-hardcore, but the opposite side completely flips the script and makes me think I'm bird-dogging an eye-widening HOT SNAKES practice session circa 2000 or so? It's literally "split" personality disorder; correct. The treatment for which is the ol' screwdriver-across-one-side rule applicable to schizoid vinyls for decades now. Side B gets chopped up onto a mix for someone you want to "get with", Side A gets blasted out the window at that bro-party you want to "go away." (RW)
(Twistworthy)

BRAIN VACATION – "Head Cases" LP

This Chicago LP came outta nowhere. Sounds like hardcore or punk or whatever, but something refreshing to the sound, so honest, so Midwest. Captures that weird mid-'80s era of exploration and hardcore bands honing their own distinctive sound, like later ARTICLES OF FAITH or HÜSKER DÜ or what it felt like hearing DILLINGER FOUR for the first time. Not just trying to sound like whatever played out shit you've already heard. There are also doses of the '00s Chitown Hozac weird punk sound, but moreso I'm just feeling that timeless twenty-something suburban nobodies owning their shit. Kinda amazed to hear that's still possible. (GB)
(Wall of Youth)

BROKEN BONES – "Vigilante" EP

Bald old men playing garbage for idiots. Listen—I'd let almost anyone fuck me in the ass, but BROKEN BONES? *Not on your life*! This is some straight-up boring useless shit that brings absolutely nothing to the table. Soundtrack to a punk LARP. Hundred-year-old men playing music for preteens. Do I need to describe the music? If you're reading *MRR* you have a good chance of knowing what BROKEN BONES sounds like. Now imagine that same exact sound played in 2016. *You got it*! Congratulations. I'd like to offer you a job—my job—reviewing records at *MRR* so that I'm never stuck with such a tasteless task as reviewing a *new* BROKEN BONES *record* again. (BB)
(Doctor Strange)

BUMMERS EVE – LP

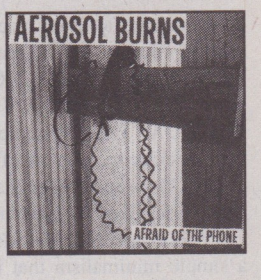
This LP starts off with a JOY DIVISION riff but quickly gets away from it. The songs have a laidback, groovy, modern dance style. It sounds like '60s garage wrung through a beat generator, but not a never-ending EDM one. One that gives it a new waveish-ness without being '80s sounding. The vocals are fuzzy and distorted but have a sing-along quality. The music is catchy and weird with just enough of both elements. I like this a lot. (CK)
(Almost Ready)

CASUAL – LP

Have you ever wondered what it was like to be a bored stoner in the suburbs? Put this album on and it will magically take you there! If you're already there, this album is what you're looking for. It doesn't matter if you're hanging out in your friend Dwayne's basement, standing out front of 7-11, or just driving around for no reason—this album should be playing. High energy pop punk that is catchy as hell and never lets up. You want something deep and meaningful? Fuck off and eat more candy! This album is great! (FS)
(Dead Broke / Square of Opposition)

THE CAVEMEN – LP

Fucking brilliant! Throwback stuff like this could only come from places where nothing dies, like Europe and Los Angeles



or, in this case, a cut-off place like Auckland. Garage voodoo caveman trash, heavier on the PAGANS / NEW YORK DOLLS / CANDY SNATCHERS punk than CRAMPS / MAD DADDYS / BIRTHDAY PARTY stomp. Leather, animal print, teeth necklaces, and lots of greasy hair make for a sleazy Crisco and broken glass slip'n'slide of a good ride. Lyrics like "*We used to hold hands / we used to ride bikes / now she rides with the third reich*" reflect a simple minimalism that is refreshing yet fierce. Songs about meth, hating school, drinking beer, and listening to MOTÖRHEAD are like shattered glassed reflections into this reviewer's darkened soul, catapulting this record into this month's top ten. Good work, mates. (RO)
(1:12)

THE CAVEMEN – "Juvenile Delinquent/Swamp Thing"

Raw garage punk from New Zealand who sound like they've been listening to a lot of the REATARDS and SICK THOUGHTS. Or in other words: the A-side foes the fast'n'quick KBD-style as well as the two aforementioned bands, whereas "Swamp Thing" reminds me of a kinda swamp-y AMREP style à la the U-MEN and a slower NEW BOMB TURKS. Still quite good, this. (JD)
(1:12)

CAVES – "Leaving" 12"

It's amazing what a thick coating of fuzz can do for your record. CAVES are a two-piece from Bristol, UK, and they play mid-tempo pop punk with a whole lot of big fuzzy guitar as well as some feedback and distorted vocals. It's a simple formula, and it works, with catchy melodies fighting with lots of cool noise and laid over driving beats. Musically, these songs aren't far from what RVIVR was writing circa their first LP, but the presentation is such that if you thought that was a little too sweet, then you might be drawn in to this. Conversely, if you thought WEED's last LP was just too sad, but you liked the overall sound, this short record might just have the melodies to lift you out of those dumps. (LP)
(Dead Broke)

CHIMPGRINDER / MISCEGENATOR – split EP

Here's a split from the east coast with two bands that sound nothing alike. First we have Philly's CHIMPGRINDER, who bring us some heavy stoned to the bone psychedelia. These guys have definitely studied their FLOYD, but they don't forget that they're still punks, and they're still pissed, man. They have a bit of that desert rock feel, but they are little more warped than those bands. I'm into it. Brooklyn's MISCONGENERATOR brings us some straight-up crusty street punk, featuring lyrics about stuff they hate. They're raw and pissed, but there's really nothing special going on here. If you are a tripped out angry street punk stoner, this 7" is for you. (BA)
(Urban Folk Art)

CHROMA – "Cuerpos Dóciles" LP

Members of RAKTA and LAS OTRAS bring their musical perspectives to the table, producing this bold femme post-punk from Barcelona. Haunting, stripped-down riffs recall OTAN with the seething vocal styling of VULPESS and the dark aura of DESECHABLES without forgetting about Riot Grrrl. Regardless of the comparisons, they are treading new ground, and I am really digging their approach. Well-conceived artwork and insert with lyrics cover some grim and intelligent topics relating to feminism and biopower. I look forward to the next release and to see where they are headed. West Coast residents, if you didn't catch them here in February, you messed up! Do, however, pick up this record as a consolation. (LT)
(Dê o Fora / Hysteria / Nada Nada)

CIRCLEK – "First Six" EP

Nashville's CIRCLEK have caught shit-fi lightning in a bottle with their debut. Complete nonsense! The EP baffles with six scuzzy, totally inept hardcore punkers, all purportedly a mash-up of Nashville metal (WTF!) and NYHC. Dubious! A stunningly fucked and shoddy outing, but the record's very existence proves the genius of all involved. It's that terrible / perfect. "40 Hours Of Terror" isn't long enough. I'm not even sure that I like this, but I love it anyway. (MC)
(Glad Fact)

COMBOMATIX – "Chinese Songs for Bad Boys" LP

This is the second album from this French duo. I am a bit stumped by the title of this record. What exactly are "Chinese Songs For Bad Boys?" It is intriguing that COMBOMATIX try to incorporate some Chinese inspired musical snippets into their garage rock moderne. I'd be curious to know what is going on. The majority of the tunes are straight-up fuzzy garage. The songs are catchy and played well. It sounds nice. (CK)
(Howlin' Banana / Retard)

COME 'N GO – "Tumbling Heights" CD

This is the fourth album from these Swiss garage rockers. This record is mostly straight bluesy-style rock. It has a nice sound with garage rock moderne flair. The accented vocals are the only thing that gives away that this band isn't from Mississippi or the Bay Area. Additionally, there is a strange spoken word tribute to a recording engineer David Briggs. There is also a really wild cover of BAD BRAINS "Attitude." It has female vocals and sounds like it was recorded in a tin can. It's a swirling, manic auditory delight. (CK)
(Voodoo Rhythm)

CRETINS – "Meat" EP

The second EP from these Richmond, VA hardcore misanthropes improves on the burly, pummeling sounds of the first 7". The tempo changes and moshy or identifiably Reagan-era Yankee flair are abandoned for something that is, mostly, more streamlined and sinister. Most of the record is a blaze, marked by fast-paced, unpredictable riffing that brings the vitriol, and tight-but-not-*too*-tight drumming for extra power. The barked vocals are a little less reminiscent of the NIHILISTICS than on the last record, but equally as spiteful, and momentarily descend into the Jerry A quasi-talking thing. I really hope this band is as good live as they are on record. If you like MUCH WORSE from Minneapolis, this band isn't too far off. (DG)
(Deranged)

CRYBABY – "Drag Me Under" LP

If you had a magic wand and wished RVIVR were an Emo band, this album might suddenly materialize into your outstretched hand. Clearly whatever is inspiring RVIVR is also inspiring CRYBABY (which is a compliment), but the vocals have that sore throat emo cadence you'd typically find in heartfelt early '00s emo punk (not sure if that's a compliment). But it works together. It's pop punk for the lonely hearts club. It's emo for kids who maybe wanna mosh every once in a while. And it's a record for those bookworm punks who care more about lyrics than guitar riffs. But the guitar riffs are pretty sick. (FS)
(Square of Opposition)

DANGER SIGNS – "Reset" CD

There is something so annoying about pop punk. It may be the over-the-top high energy. It may be the production slickness. Perhaps it's the lack of nuance. Maybe it's just me. DANGER SIGNS are a band who utilizes all of the above, but also have a bit of grit so you can't easily dismiss them as just another in the long line. There are even a few songs that are not peppy. They are a bit arty. Overall it is pop punk with a rock'n'roll edge. Fronted by Dan McNellie, formerly of RADIO BEATS, TEST PATTERNS, and ACTIVATIONS. (CK)
(Big Neck)

DEATH SIDE – "Bet on the Possibility" LP

Short answer: this is an essential and long overdue reissue of the greatest Japanese hardcore record ever made. The magic that Ishiya, Chelsea, You, and Muka-Chin produced in this session not only eclipsed everything they had done before, but stands to this day as one of, if not *the* best, most completely jaw-dropping hardcore records ever produced. Much of that credit must go to Hiroyuki "Chelsea" Kishida, who was easily one of the best (again, probably *the* best) writer/arrangers/soloists in the history of hardcore punk (as his future work with PAINTBOX on the *Earth Ball Sports Tournament*—and especially the *Trip, Trance and Travelling* records—would further prove). That being said, You on bass and Muka-Chin on drums deserve enormous credit for their flawless work on this record, rolling with the frequently challenging material that Chelsea produced and always keeping it grounded in a hardcore punk context. Both are amazing players but never overplay a note. Of course, Ishiya's reputation as one of the best vocalists in hardcore is solidified here, reinforced by the brilliant backing vocals, which are always not only strong but frequently executed in ways that lesser songwriters would never have thought of. What other band could have written the absolutely perfect hardcore anthem "Fight Your Way" and faded out into a solo piano reprise of the song's unforgettable melodic line? What other band could have written "Crossfire," with its multi-tracked riffs and solos, brilliant choruses, psychedelic outro, and perfect structure? This album has no dross, no filler, and no songs that could be improved. It's a shame that we received the reissue for review after all the label's copies were already sold, but such is the legend of DEATH SIDE that of course they were gone in days. Feral Ward did a great job with the

reissue, as the record itself sounds amazing and the sleeve and insert are reproduced flawlessly, housed in a gorgeous tip-on gatefold that is just as sturdy as the original sleeve. Congratulations to everyone who scored a copy, you're now in the club. Everyone else needs to acquire one by any means necessary. (AU)
(Feral Ward)

DEATH SIDE – "Wasted Dream" LP

For me, this is *the* record that quantifies the "traditional" Japanese hardcore sound. Muka's snare hand fires like a machine gun, managing to hold a groove while playing so impossibly fast…and it's hard to describe how essential that crash cymbal is to the overall sound, as if you're hearing two beats at the same time. You supports the floor like few low end warriors before or since; the dude is like a rock, and the bass on this record is perfection. Ishiya's vocals are legendary, a growling scream that has spawned countless unsuccessful imitators… and of course there's Chelsea. I've never seen anyone dominate an instrument like he did, and the leads on this record (and all of the other DEATH SIDE releases) are from another planet. *Wasted Dream* was released in 1989, and their ability to deliver impossibly furious hardcore punk with such a casually brilliant ear for hooks coupled with screaming metallic guitars has arguably not been equaled since. This is as close to a perfect record as I will ever own, and Feral Ward's reissue is beautiful. Worth the wait. (WN)
(Feral Ward)

DELETIONS – "Hungers" LP

This record is really close to being great. There are songs on here that kill it. The good stuff sounds like a more pop BIG BOYS or the EMBARASSMENT with just a hint of DEVO. The recording is perfect for the songs. It's lo-fi, but you can hear everything really well. The drums are heavy in the mix with a blown-out bass sound and a distorted but heavy on the high-end guitar sound. There are some unnecessary new wave style songs that bring the record down a bit, but just try to ignore those. Start on the B-side, you won't be disappointed. (PA)
(FDH / P.Trash)

DEVIOUS ONES – "I'm Allergic to You/Synchronize or Vaporize"

Catchy, slick garage-y punk from Detroit. These two songs remind me too much of the ZODIAC KILLERS, but the performance is more cartoony, as if the BRIEFS were performing ZKs songs. It's poppy, peppy goofiness. (CK)
(East Grand)

DHK / MAQUINA MUERTA – split LP

In-house columnist Andrew Underwood pretty much covered this release in his column last month, so I suggest scouring the April issue for a more comprehensive analysis, *but* I will still add my voice to the resounding *"Yes!!!"* heard from worldwide fans of raw, fervent D-beat the moment this record dropped. Mexico's MAQUINA MUERTA approach their rage with patience and deliberate intensity, never letting the speed take over and opting for calculated attacks. Painfully distorted guitars (of course) and excessive vocal manipulations (of course) that still cannot mask the power. Peru's DHK sound like they got teleported from 1984; perfect buzzsaw guitars and the kind of brilliantly raw recording that you simply can't fake. Primitive and passionate hardcore punk from both bands… some will say formulaic, others will say fantastic. (WN)
(Metadona)

DIGITAL LEATHER – "All Faded" LP

It's been at least three or four LPs since I last checked in with this long-running synth-punk provocateur unit, but as an early adopter of the band's output (short-run CDRs aplenty!), I'm happy to make their acquaintance once again. Thee LEATHER had long been the outlet for mainman Shawn Foree's bleak bleepin', but *All Faded* features a full band and (naturally, biologically) augmented approached. Frustration, hopelessness and resignation to oblivion continue to dominate thematically, but *All Faded* is sunnier than I would've imagined. In my mind's eye, I envision a 45 with "Cold Inside" and "So Warm" and it's a great 'un. I don't think I ever would've saddled DIGITAL LEATHER with a new wave tag before this, but this is a very danceable, poppy and vaguely absurd affair, so wave away, dudes. (MC)
(FDH)

DOMESTICS – "Brutal Regimes" EP

A rad, older-style hardcore record from these Suffolk, England vets. Catchy, ripping tunes, a lack of metal influence, and cool, appropriately hateful lyrics. *"I spit on your flag / and you can spit on mine."* They mostly blast through, but "You're Fucking Dead" is a bouncy banger. Kangaroo wins again. (JM)
(Kangaroo / Kibou)

DRAFTED – "Burn the Confederate Flag" EP

This EP, as we received it, is light on the packaging. A plain record sleeve holds the lyric sheet, and we got a promo spiel as well. The band's from the suburbs of Houston. The started in high school in 2003, and these songs are from their 2015 CD. They play a straightforward, tight hardcore, mostly fast, with a warm production that helps them. Still, this is nothing special. The lyrics are about the death of Fred Phelps, "Burn the Confederate Flag," and blowing up the local, ancient, empty stadium. All reasonable sentiments, though maybe going after easy targets. They go off the rails with the closer, "Ted Nugent Is a Pussy," where they say going to fight in a rotten, imperialist war makes one a "man," while skipping out (a *way* better option for everyone) makes one a "pussy." This is pretty stupid all the way around. A safe pass. (JM)
(Goober)

EJECTOR SEATS – "High Hopes, Low Expectations" LP

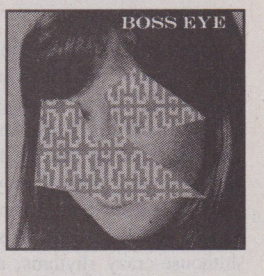
I think these guys intentionally threw me for a fucking loop here. A super fancy, expensive gatefold, yet super plain and generic cover, and a personalized handwritten apology for sending in a record that wasn't really fast, or even punk, and explaining why they felt the need to put excessive tambourine on it—I obviously expected the worst. This is fucking tight, though! Wild and dirty, hardworking old man rock from presumably out of nowhere and with all the hooks. I can't catch a continuous vibe from these guys. At one minute there's some garage worship, the next there's some obvious early Lookout! love, tasteful hair metal solos, a bass player that secretly has an Albini shrine, and a super cheap nasty guitar tone that sounds like an aluminum trash can. And it fucking rules! I'm super stoked to hear this today. (DZ)
(Collision Course)

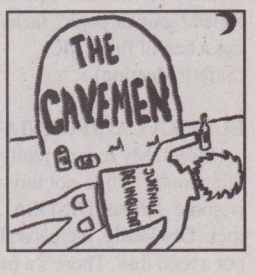
EN KERNAGHAN BAND – LP

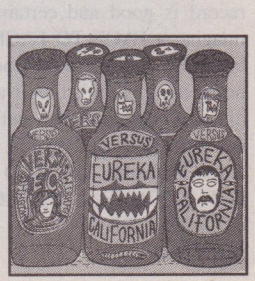
This is some CRAMPS worship recorded in the suburbs of Brisbane, Australia. Originally released on cassette in 2014, this collection definitely deserves the vinyl treatment. EN KERNAGHAN BAND is Ethan Kernaghan, staring out from the album cover in demented cult member pose. Charmingly aggro, punked-out rockabilly. Even his slow, trashy version of "Krsna Krsna" is fascinating. This is weird, wild, and fun. Great record. (CK)
(Ever/Never)

ESTROGEN HIGHS / FRUSTRATIONS – split LP

Two unjustly under-celebrated acts paired together for







maximum impact…a split not rooted in nonsense! I salute you, Safety Meeting. ESTROGEN HIGHS are recognized by around seven of us as total studs in the DIY game, managing a slew of varied, psych-tinged takes, capable of both direct hits and softer sneak attacks, heard in equal measure here. Patient rumblers, they are…All winners too! FRUSTRATIONS are entirely more bombastic, but no less impressive. Guitar scree a-go-go, throbbing shithouse-crazy rhythms, all coated in that same Detroit neon sewage that turns man to mutant. A record that flat-out disproves the notion that so-called "garage punk" lacks brains or artistic merit. Eat a bag of this. (MC)
(Safety Meeting)

EUREKA CALIFORNIA – "Versus" LP

Sweet. My second really full sounding two-piece this month. While not anywhere near a rip off, this is some serious DINOSAUR JR worshiping indie rock. Obviously, there's a slight '90s vibe, but that's not a total diss. There's a pretty cool party vibe, and maybe a slight hipster dude feel, which I'm secretly OK with. I mean, if you're gonna rock this well (as a two piece!), you go ahead and sport that cute little mustache, bro. I have a feeling these two are playing to a slightly different audience and might otherwise fly under my radar, but this is tight, and I'm stoked I found it. (DZ)
(HHBTM)

EXTREME SMOKE 57 – "Corruption Deteriorates" 10"

Formed in 1990, these guys are the first grind band from Slovenia! I had never heard of them before now, but after a little research it seems to me that this new offering is pretty much in line with their previous releases. Very brutal bare bones grindcore with vomitus vocals. Think EXTREME NOISE TERROR, AGATHOCLES, and even a little UNHOLY GRAVE. Grind freaks should definitely check this out, and the posers should definitely steer clear. (BA)
(self-released)

FACE TO FACE – "Protection" LP

FACE TO FACE remains true to the tradition of writing catchy tunes and doing it well. Fuck, they've been a band for 25 years now, so they obviously know what they're doing! This record also marks their return to Fat Wreck Chords after twenty years and the professionalism shows. FACE TO FACE is definitely a professional punk rock band. Catchy songs about depressing shit with brilliant basslines and many "*whoas*" done in a very polished way. This album was produced by Bill Stevenson (DESCENDENTS, ALL, BLACK FLAG, ONLY CRIME) and Jason Livermore at the Blasting Room in Colorado, so you know it has to sound legit. This record is good and certainly better than I would imagine a FACE TO FACE record in 2016 to be, but by no means is it their best offering. When I first heard this, I didn't like it all that much because it didn't really stand out, but the more I listen to it, the more it grows on me. Check it out if you're a fan of bands like BAD RELIGION, NO USE FOR A NAME, LAGWAGON and, well, FACE TO FACE. (DB)
(Fat Wreck)

FOX FUN / GROWWING PAINS – split EP

GROWWING PAINS bring to mind the early days of Lookout! Records: their songs remind me of nothing more than the first MR. T EXPERIENCE LP. On their side, FOX FUN channel the sounds of '90s indie rock: TEENAGE FANCLUB, WEEZER, PAVEMENT. (AM)
(Glad Fact)

FRENZY – "Disconnected" EP

Man, FRENZY is a fucking good band. Their ability to join the straightforward drive of early USHC to noize-punk craziness without ever seeming gimmicky or contrived is very, very impressive. The two-bass lineup helps, as it keeps the songs grounded in the practical world of the low-end, while the lone guitar can go fucking crazy without making that the focal point of the band's sound. The dry, reverb-less vocals are definitely a big help in that regard as well—definitely more DC '80 than Kyushu '82. For what it's worth, a certain individual I know who has little use for any hardcore produced after 1990 and none for anything produced after 2000 thinks FRENZY are one of the only hardcore concerns going that are worth a shit. That has to mean they're doing something right. This EP was produced for their recent Japan tour, but it should still be relatively easy to pick up a copy if you move quickly. (AU)
(Hardcore Survives)

FRUSTRATIONS / GAZER – split EP

One of those rarer objects to come across 'n 2016: the split 7" EP. And to keep to expectations, both of these bands are channeling that pummeling sheet-metal-guitar scream-grunt that put labels like Trance, PCP Entertainment, Primo Scree, and Amphetamine Reptile on the map. So it's a bit of a pander to that milieu, but a tear trails down the dust on my cheek to the days when all this guttural noise was just "punk rock" and not some separate genre. All you UNSANE and TAR and SURGERY and CHERUBS fans! It's safe to come out now! (RW)
(Glad Fact)

FUCKING VIRGINS – "Ziek Zwak En Punk" CD

First I've heard of this Dutch ensemble, but what one has here, me likes muchly. They produce a nice mix of rambunctious Brit late '70s sounding stuff (think UK SUBS and early VIBRATORS), and early '80s melodic Southern California stuff (think early AGENT ORANGE minus the surf and ADOLESCENTS). Lots of snot, melody and harmony. Real good. (RK)
(Fucking Virgins)

GAG – "America's Greatest Hits" LP

The first time I saw and heard these guys, I wasn't too impressed. More arty intelligent hardcore from Olympia? *Yawn*. I don't often need intelligence mixing with my hardcore. No fun. After listening to and seeing this band again, I began to see them for the marvelously freakish geniuses that they are. And this record? Monstrous, feedback-laden, orgasmic joy. This band works best for me in mid to slow tempos when the drums pound a hypnotic gestapo marching beat, the guitars squeal, and the singer comes in all *AARRRRRLLLLLGGGGHHH*! You know. That one. Some will say VOID, UNITED MUTATION, even BLACK FLAG. I say...fuck 'em. There's a painting of a guy with no face riding a motorcycle on the cover. *Con safos…* (RO)
(Iron Lung)

G-ANX – "Flashbacks" 2xLP

Good 'ol G-ANX, the weirdo pothead little brothers of late '80s Swedish hardcore. While bands like TOTALITÄR and AVSKUM were ripping it up with their takes on the DISCHARGE / ANTI-CIMEX approach, G-ANX were adding grindcore, reggae, and epic synth weirdness to the same influences, creating a style that very few bands have even attempted to reproduce. The amazing thing is that they did such a good goddamn job of it! This double LP collects the material from all four of their EPs and adds an extra side of never before heard demo and rehearsal tracks as well. The first side will have you thinking "Well, here's some shit that sounds like some Swedish HERESY plus NAPALM DEATH type shit," but hold on until the end of side one, when you're hit with "Nineteen Ninety Eight," when the tempo suddenly drops and they're dropping some synthy, AMEBIX-style driving stuff. The progression continues from side to side, as the strictly straightforward stuff falls away until you're enjoying tracks like "Clouds of Cancer," which is as much roots reggae as it is crust, and "In Harmony," a mid-tempo synth-crust number that makes sense in a post-COUNTERBLAST / FILTH OF MANKIND world but was revolutionary for its time. The demo material on Side-D does a great deal to help contextualize G-ANX as MOB 47 acolytes at the start of their career, before their Brit-core influences and the spaced-out stuff made their way into their musical vocabulary. The packaging provides a ton of pictures of our handsome antagonists, but no lyrics or information beyond a short remembrance of the band, which is a bit of a disappointment, though you do get fancy color vinyl. Just like when they were around, this stuff won't be for everybody (though the demo material would be a thriller for anybody who's into raw/rä-punk), but for those of you who can dig some far-out stuff with your fastcore/crust, this is essential. (AU)
(Threat From The Past)

GAUCHO – "Desplazados" EP

This band is from Canada, but these scratchy pogo jams are sung in Spanish. Main ingredients: steady pogo beat, swervy three-chord riff, and in-the-red vocals. The guitarist steps on a delay pedal here and there to flare up a tuneless guitar solo or make a riff soar a bit. The ultra-raw recording has me recalling early '90s Mexican or Colombian punk, rather than contemporary bands. The riffs aren't really sticking with me so much, so it's the steady pulse and raw fury that keeps this afloat. I am hard to please, but I think you'll like it. (MA)
(Iron Lung)

GET BENT – "Discography" LP

I'm sure that there are lots of dudes somewhere who have worn out their GET BENT 7" and tapes in anticipation of this record, and to them I say, "Congratulations!" To the rest of you, GET BENT were an emo-leaning pop punk band from New York, New York in the late '00s that put out a few records.

Musically, they were more or less along the same lines as their contemporaries LATTERMAN from Long Island but are also comparable, ultimately, to D4, the member of the pantheon of bummed dude pop punk these New Yorkers most clearly kneel at. So hoist your beers. Or don't. (LP)
(Dead Broke)

GIANT PEACH – "Tarantula" LP

A lot of bands that get compared to DINOSAUR JR are actually missing some of the key ingredients that made that band great. While most everyone nails the crazy huge and fuzzy guitar sound, just as many people miss the guitar shredding, and almost everyone loses the tenderness in the singing and songwriting that made that band sound so much like early to mid '70s NEIL YOUNG. GIANT PEACH, while not nailing in super hard on every front, at least make entries into more of the necessary categories for meaningful comparison than many of their peers. So, folks, I can confidently say that GIANT PEACH sound like DINOSAUR JR, perhaps moreso than most other bands to bear that albatross around their collective necks. True, they're essentially a pop punk band, with driving tempos and more emphasis on rhythm and "chunk" in the guitar playing. And perhaps that leaves less room for the guitar to be psychedelically loud and ultimately just leaving the album feeling much more straight ahead rock feeling, but hey, if you need a fuzz fix with a touch of shred, you could do worse than this. (LP)
(Don Giovanni / Shitty Present)

GLEAM GARDEN – "2006–2013 Singles" CD

If nothing else, Tokyo's GLEAM GARDEN is prolific. This CD compiles 22 songs from eleven different releases and shows their growth as a band trying to figure out their sound. The early stuff is shambolic pop punk in the vein of BENT OUTTA SHAPE and other raspy-throated twenty-somethings of the early '00s. The early songs are good, but the snare sounds like it was recorded in a metal echo chamber. Still, good. On their split with BROWNTROUT (starting with the song "Magic Touch" here), the band appears to solidify their sound more and find a good footing. They're taking some inspiration from the Gainesville pop punk of No Idea as well as other notables like TILTWHEEL and IRON CHIC. It seems like they edited it down to the catchiest and most crucial moments, which I can't complain about. I've never understood why pop punkers wrote such long songs. Just give us the hook and get out. GLEAM GARDEN does not disappoint in that department. Towards the end of the CD, the band is looking in a more power pop directions (JOE JACKSON, NERVES) but still retains that urgency. It's a good collection and really shows their growth as a band. (GH)
(Snuffy Smiles)

GLITTER – "Joy of a Toy" EP

I last saw Calgary's GLITTER fucking up the vibe at a semi-spikey hardcore gig in Portland. Most of the other bands fit a certain template: the crowd knew when to pogo, when to army crawl across the pit, etc. This band just confounded everyone. I've never seen so little movement at a hardcore show in the Northwest. They might be harder to write about than they are to slam to, but both things are doable if you're open-minded, right? The opener, "Garden," dangles some SACCHARINE TRUST lead lines over a spiraling mid-tempo bassline. The recording sounds especially disorienting somehow, like there were two lead tracks being played back at different speeds. It might be my favorite track. Each song has its own unique way of creating a downright fucked vibe. There's a bit of phaser treatment on "Merry Xmas," which ends in a highly negative comedown of a guitar solo. The guitars aren't too distorted sounding, which helps the off-kilter riffment come across. The vocals, on the other hand, are unintelligible, a bile-spewing bark one moment and a nasal whine the next. It's a nasty sound. If you're on a kick for twisted American folk forms anywhere from the CRUCIFUCKS to MYSTIC INANE, you will probably dig this one as much as I did. (EW)
(Lumpy)

HALE BOPP ASTRONAUTS – LP

HALE BOPP ASTRONAUTS is a punk rock band from Charlestown, SC. They play catchy songs that are full of energy in the vein of the RAMONES but not as obvious as other bands who would label themselves Ramonescore. I'm sure they have really fun shows. Songs about politics, bar shows, alien invasions, and relationships. My favorite tracks are "Anunnaki Girl," "Attn. All Punks," "Earls Night Out," "Losers Anthem," and "Emotional Ninja." This record is packed with melody, energy, and attitude. If you get a chance to check this album out, you should. I enjoyed it! Great tunes! For fans of bands like the LILLINGTONS, the QUEERS, PINK LINCOLNS, and PARASITES. (DB)
(self-released)

HOITER DIPOITER – "Mit dem Kopf durch die Hand" CD

Apparently, these likely Germanic lads (of the shaven-headed persuasion) have been kicking out the jams since 2004. And judging by this effort, they do it rather well. Very reminiscent of the golden age of PETER AND THE TEST TUBE BABIES (à la "Mating Sounds Of South American Frogs") with lashings of driving melodic punk with lots of fancy guitar work. Twin vocalists add the instant gang choruses, but it's really the nifty tunes that do it for me. Quite excellent. Reminds me a lot of the late mighty DIE WALTER ELF with the harmonic twin guitar parts. All the lyrics are in German, so frankly, no idea what they're on about. Shit, this good, though. I'll even forgive them the horrendous mutton chop facial hair. (RK)
(Spirit Of The Streets)

HORACE PINKER – "Recover" EP

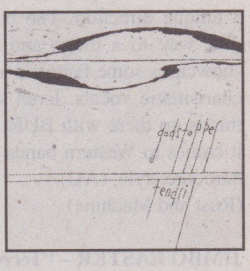
'90s punk rock veterans HORACE PINKER have been playing their blend of punk and alternative rock since 1991, but I guess this is their first 7" release in 20 years. That's a long fucking time. Title track "Recover" is a decent punk rock song with its fair share of frustration and gloominess, mid-tempo drumming, and broken down chords. The second track, "Oil and Water," starts off with a cool bass line and builds up to a catchy and heart melting chorus: "*Surrender – I'll never stop the fight!*" Dan Lumley of the RIVERDALES and SCREECHING WEASEL plays on this EP. I would expect faster, more upbeat drumming from him, but with HORACE PINKER he shows an ability to play more complex shit than just your standard fast pop punk beat. This band reminds me of HOT WATER MUSIC without Chuck Ragan, so if that's what you're into, you would probably dig this EP. (DB)
(Dead Broke)

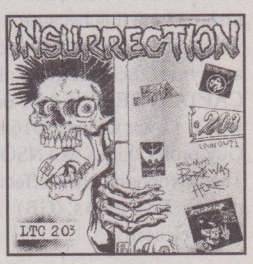
ILLS – "Fuck This Planet" 10"

By the album title alone, you know what you are getting into with the ILLS. Female-fronted punk rock with lots of attitude. It's screechy and frantic, but also very catchy. There are fifteen short, fast paced songs on this LP. To quote one of their songs, it's "*Fun Fun Fuck You!*" (CK)
(No Front Teeth)

INSURRECTION – "LTC 203/Intro"

Roughly three decades after thrashing the arid Arizona wasteland, Tempe's INSURRECTION rises again in the form of this two-track 7" featuring demo recordings from 1987. "LTC 203" lays down lumbering two-chord riffs offset by





breakneck-speed hardcore blasts, while a snotty, Darby-esque vocalist rails on about receiving an eviction notice. The flip is simply titled "Intro," and I can imagine them opening their set with this slower tune, setting the stage for an evening of raging HC for the Tempe punks of the mid-to-late '80s. INSURRECTION existed in the heyday of three-initial bands, and judging by the flyers reprinted on the sleeve, these guys opened for their share of 'em—RKL, BGK, JFA, DRI, UPS, etc.—as well as lesser-known ensembles like MR. UGLY, HERNIA BRIEFS, and RABBID RABBIT. By this point, crossover influences had seeped into the scene with mixed results. INSURRECTION shows almost no metal damage, though, delivering straightforward hardcore the likes of which you'd find on one of those old Mystic comps with like 40 bands. The raw, demo-quality recording suits them well, and my only complaint is that their legacy is limited to a mere two songs. (CS)
(Slope)

ISOTOPE – "Midnight Soldier/Final Wind of Mercy"

So I'll admit a little bias right at the top: ISOTOPE are a band full of musicians I've liked from other bands, I love them live, and I really enjoyed the demo. That being said, I was a little bummed with this EP. "Midnight Soldier" is such a by-the-numbers recreation of a Japanese hardcore song that it honestly felt a bit contrived. Certainly it's a well constructed and performed song, but like the first ZERO (Minneapolis) record, it's too consumed by its influences. Fortunately, "Final Wind of Mercy" is a much better representation of the bands' ability to absorb influence and take it in a unique direction. The buried howls in the intro give way to a tough and biting performance that showcases some fantastic leads and their trademark charismatic vocals. Even with the weaker A-Side, this is up there with BURIAL and SELFISH when it comes to Western bands attempting the Japanese hardcore style. (AU)
(Rust and Machine)

JIMBO EASTER – "Terror Trash" EP

Zany stuff, this JIMBO EASTER one-sided color xerox 7" with hand-written labels. I guess they assigned me this because it's "weird." Well, it's def weird, but in that self-aware way that's kinda jokey / annoying / fuck this guy. Like I don't wanna listen to CAPTAIN BEEFHEART or ZAPPA or whatever, so why'd I want to hear 2016 beardo weirdo guy do it? Guy prolly thinks MANSON is kool and shit. Barf. The saxophone thru effects pedals is kinda cool, though. Five tracks. (GB)
(self-released)

JOHNNY MOPED – "It's a Real Cool Baby" CD

A new release from this UK pub/punk band that started in the mid-'70s. There are three original members in the current lineup as well as a longtime bass player and a new second guitarist. A little confusing, but it's nice to know who is still in the band with these reunions. Their debut LP came out in 1978, and there was a reunion LP in 1991. This is pretty punk rocking. No metal direction here. A few slower songs on this. These guys were rooted in the pub scene, so don't expect UK82 hardcore. I liked this release. It packs some punch with some burly vocals. Along the ways of EDDIE AND THE HOT RODS and ANGELIC UPSTARTS, to some degree. Worth it for the rockers. (RL)
(Damaged Goods)

KIELTOLAKI – "Vapauden Illuusio" LP

A total juggernaut of an LP! Fans of Finnish hardcore likely already know this band, as they've put out consistently crushing material for the past ten years. Here you can expect the same panicked vocal attack, rumbling bass, fluid and persistent pounding, and perfectly timed melodies from the guitar. It's mastered *loud* and packaged handsomely, as we've come to expect from Feral Ward. If you don't like Finnish hardcore, there might be something wrong with you. If you think you might like Finnish hardcore, but don't know for sure, this is an excellent place to start. (MA)
(Feral Ward)

KOMMIE KILPATRICK – "Let's Get Small" EP

A bunch of songs on one seven inch by this Dee-Troit band named after their ill-fated former crooked mayor. Pretty good basement recorded slop party trash ranging from CIRCLE JERKS hardcore to CARBONAS cool to RIP OFFS fuck-you-sing-alongs meant to be found on the sticky floor of your next shindig. Fuck it up. (RO)
(Glad Fact)

KORSFÄST – "Ingen Ro För En Sliten Själ" LP

Solid second album from this Scandi four-piece whose "members of" legacy stretches back over three decades. KORSFÄST cooks up a baker's dozen tunes on this 45 RPM platter sure to satisfy the appetites of studs-and-dreads aficionados from Malmö to Minneapolis and beyond. Precision D-beat assaults that recall past greats from NO SECURITY, UNCURBED and the like. If that piques your interest, I'd keep an eye out for this. (CS)
(D-Takt & Råpunk)

LANTERN – "Black Highways and Green Garden Roads" LP

This sounds like a circa-1970 high school band of teens obsessed with the KINKS and the ZOMBIES! It has an innocent/sincere "teen tribute act" feeling to it. The people in this group are grownups, but something about it is youthful and endearing… It feels goofy and bubblegum psyche in places, there's a hat tip to 1980s garage revivalism, plus a few soul covers and a couple tricks evoking a country-baroque LOVE or even that doomed on the river CANNED HEAT feeling… Somewhere between the ELECTRONIC HOLE, RELATIVELY CLEAN RIVERS and the CHOCOLATE WATCH BAND?! Really all over the place but sounding more like a mix tape than a mess! Apparently inspired by the FLAMIN GROOVIES, DEAD MOON and BILLY CHILDISH this Philly/Montreal combo have a pretty cool thing going. Male/female vocals are equally enjoyable. I can imagine them getting swept up by the Burgerpalooza or Austin Psych Fest scene but the songwriting is way cooler/more interesting than most of that crowd. Wasn't expecting to like this as much as I did! Bubblegum psychedelics. (LG)
(Sophomore Lounge)

LAURICE – "G.A.Y.D.A.R." LP

After releasing several volumes of "arresting" archival material from a cult figure who went from straight nowhere to quasi-semi-legendary in some period of time greater than "no time flat," LAURICE has released his first new record in twenty years. It pounds home a very consistent theme, repeatedly, for the entire length of the 12" record, so let's not get all coy about it, shall we? "Brokeback Mountain." "Big Boy." "Gaydar." "Hot Malibu Nights." Okay, that last ditty is more generically applicable, but the more conflicted males reading this should already be clenched tighter than Dick's hatband. LAURICE's re-entry into the nation's pop hole should be greeted with deliriously gay banter and a barely suppressed "*scchhhhhlork*!" of appreciation. Warning: this is a very "punk" record, probably the most "punk" record of the year, so I would advise budding etymologists to do their homework first, preferably with a study buddy. There's probably one pouring hot steel down at the local iron works right now, so ask around. (RW)
(Mighty Mouth)

LESION – "Grudge" EP

The hauntingly abstract artwork and morbid lyrical lens had me expecting dark metallic hardcore in the vein of HEXIS or FULL OF HELL, but HOAX is actually a far more accurate reference point for LEGION's sludgy mid-tempo onslaught. Lurching guitar riffs and straight-ahead 1-2 drumming are the order of the day, while some of the more upbeat parts kick things into the realm of rudimentary black metal/punk crossover. LESION saved the best for last with B-side killers—"Exsanguination" and "Modern Plague"—two nasty little stompers that had me feeling grimy and ready to pogo. The whole thing looks and sounds great, marking this as a standout entry within this admittedly saturated style. (WB)
(Adult Crash)

MADCAPS – "Hot Sauce" LP

'60s garage mod-pop is the order of the day from these French *minets*. The ghost of the KINKS haunts the album, which is perfectly recorded but lacks energy: the playing is so tight they've run out of holes in their belts and the vintage analog equipment ensures that every lick rings crystal clear. If anything, too clear—I found myself wishing for *something* to sound a bit wrong or for a needle to go into the red. MADCAPS have nailed what they're trying to do but maybe a bit too closely. Props for choosing a Martin Parr photograph for the cover, though. (AM)
(Beast / Howlin' Banana)

THE MAX LEVINE ENSEMBLE – "Backlash, Baby" LP

This band was once (in stone cold seriousness) referred to as "the Worst Band Ever" by Ben Weasel on his radio show. Which is probably the most positive endorsement for a band I've ever heard. And it's true, MAX LEVINE ENSEMBLE is in fact a fucking amazing pop punk band. Not only in their ability to craft fun, catchy, and inspiring punk songs, but in their astounding ability to continuously get better over time. Generally, pop punk bands who have been together for over fifteen years are not

currently releasing their best material. But that's exactly what MAX LEVINE ENSEMBE has done here. This is hands down their best record. They made an album that is 100% uplifting and 0% annoying. I didn't even know that was possible! If you are currently a fan of modern pop punk, this record is essential. And if you're one of those jaded pop punk fucks who can't remember that last new album you got excited about, I dare you to listen to this record. I dare you! (FS)
(Rumbletowne)

THEE MELOMEN – "Chinatown" CD

American worshiping Croatian poppy punk with CHUCK BERRY riffs and not much soul. Equal parts HEARTBREAKERS and ANGRY SAMOANS but limp as fuck. They murder "Criminal" by the JONSES. Are things really better after communism? (RO)
(self-released)

MERE PHANTOMS – "Famine for a Slow Death" 12"

A guttural grinding churn right out of the gate, MERE PHANTOMS weigh in with serious tonnage and extreme intensity throughout. Burly tracks serve as a vehicle for fierce politics and are woven together with oppressive electronics that allow enough space to the vocals to go from powerful to terrifying. Carving your own sound out of epic crust, bleak metal, and remnants of '90s screamo is tough, but these kids sound otherworldly. The noise is a part of that, to be sure, and they do that part well, but MERE PHANTOMS stand tall as a devastating modern HC powerhouse. This one is very worthy of your attention. (WN)
(Anthems of the Undesirable)

MINDLESS ATTACK – "Kill Count" EP

Damn. First off, this is recorded like shit...not in a stylistically "shitty" way, but like, you can hear the tape deteriorating and breaking. No shame in that. This is punk. MINDLESS ATTACK plays straightforward, sloppy, pissed-off punk in the vein of FYP and our long history of bored, angry dudes in small towns just banging it out in a basement. Dudes are angry because "bitch lied to me," they have to "come home to some nagging bitch," and "consumer induced poverty," among other things. If you want to truly "rise above" (like they sing in their theme song), you might want to try harder to gain more allies. The sound of shit and failure. (GH)
(Cephia's Treat)

MIND SPIDERS – "Prosthesis" LP

The last time I reviewed MIND SPIDERS, I predicted that they were moving in such an all-out pop direction that their next LP might not be reviewable by this magazine's standards, yet here we are. The synth presence is heavier than ever on this record. On some songs, it's hard to tell where the drum machine ends and the "real" drums begin. For reference points, I'm hearing traces of later DEVO, the stark industrial tones of KRAFTWERK, the aural explorations of TOTAL CONTROL, some of the dissonance of GANG OF FOUR, and the well-worn precision of the members' other bands (MARKED MEN, RADIOACTIVITY, etc). The record sounds darker and more dissonant than I expected. It sounds heavy and foreboding, yet super catchy and uplifting (but never like goth punk). There are so many layers to each song that it's hard to dissect it in a couple of listens. It's definitely accomplished, confident, and sure to grow on me over repeated listens. Also, it's really fucking good. (GH)
(Dirtnap)

MISCALCULATIONS / NEON KNIVES – split EP

MISCALCULATIONS play clear-eyed poppy dark wave like a less frantic LOST SOUNDS. Their songs are catchy and lyrically seem sort of LE SHOK-ish?! Particularly "Eyes Glazed with Murder." A JAY REATARD feel is probably very intentional. Fun throwaway wave; makes me want an asymmetrical haircut and a Korg or two. NEON KNIVES sound like the soundtrack to a dollar bin punkshocksploitation VHS. Something that would have been written up in that book *Destroy All Movies*. Like someone put a bunch of grizzled rockers in a studio and told them to come up with some punk. Enjoyable 45, but realistically a play once and file away forever for this girl. (LG)
(No Front Teeth)

MISCHIEF BREW – "Bacchanal 'n' Philadelphia" CD

Way back at the turn of the century, MISCHIEF BREW was just Erik Petersen and an acoustic guitar (and occasionally a mandolin). This CD collects his first two vinyl offerings (his side of a split LP and an EP), and it's very impressive. He's a great storyteller, very reminiscent of UTAH PHILLIPS in his extolling of the beauties of the past and the way it ought/might be in the future. Early anarcho-folk and all the better for it. (RK)
(Pistolo)

MORALITY CRISIS – "Mash" CD

Heavy math metal here on this four-song (of sorts) release by the Minneapolis band. The title track is twenty minutes long, broken into five movements. You can't tell that it is any different by listening, as their shit is changing all the time anyway. When they stay on the groove, I'm pretty down, and while these parts are sick, they don't last. Mostly they're getting by with their discordant wildness. Usually I like it when bands sound like they practice a ton, but there's such a thing as too much. Even when they do rip through it, it sounds like insane time signatures are their first love. MORALITY CRISIS is too stop-and-start for me to fully get into it. The vocal are pained wails and bellows, and the production is pro, but not too much so. There are no lyrics included, and the little you can make out isn't too sensible. But they have a song, "F.I.B.," so you can see they're truly down with the Minnesconsin scene. (JM)
(Minnesconsin)

MOUTHEATER – "Passing Key" LP

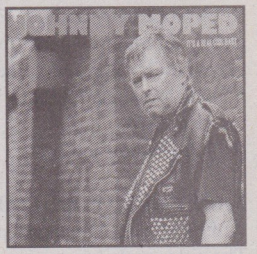
Better late than never on this one, am I right guys? This platter was released in 2014, but I'm glad they got it in to *MRR* eventually, even if just to swell the ranks of the ever growing record avalanche that is Tim Yo's legacy. The press release refers to this record as "grunge." and that may be true in the same way SHELLAC or HELMET sometimes get stuffed in that category, but if I were gonna peg it, MOUTHEATER could have opened gigs for early '90s MELVINS or CHERUBS. The bass is super heavy, meditative in its repetition, while the guitars sway back and forth between ambient single note verses and ultimate crunch choruses. MOUTHEATER is the sensitive alternative for DEATHWISH kids tired of spinning CURSED II and CONVERGE. Sometimes you gotta mellow out. For fans of: breaking edge late in the game (like at 35), full sleeves, 7/11 coffee. (MW)
(Anthems of the Undesirable)

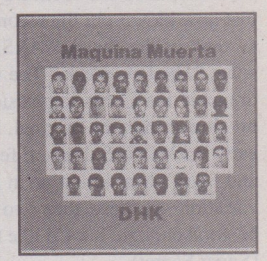
NAMELESS FRAMES – LP

This three-piece from Austin, TX has a panicky '90s garage punk style. Buzzy guitars and bored vocals. The whole performance is laidback, yet there is an attitude. I like it. (CK)
(Super Secret)

NARCOESTADO – "Juventud" EP

A welcomed repress of this Mexican combo's excellent demo tape, this time on the superior punk format. I got one of their songs stuck in my head just by looking at the cover.





Keyword: catchy-as-fuck. Five solid tracks of hook-laden, mid-tempo punk featuring a lovely gritty but tuneful voice and some nice little guitar lines. Sounds awesome. Get it, even if you already have the tape. (MA)
(Going Underground)

NASTY RUMOURS – "All Alone/T&M"

Power pop-influenced punk from Switzerland. The title track has a nice little COCKSPARRER swagger, while the flipside reminds me of NEWTOWN NEUROTICS. Overall, two great, catchy tracks. A good sign, I reckon. (AM)
(No Front Teeth)

NEW BERLIN – "New Eyes/The Drawback" flexi

Two songs on a white, one-sided flexi from McAllen, Texas' NEW BERLIN. Track one is blown out and stompy. It's similar to "Crowds" by the JAY REATARD band the ANGRY ANGLES. It's agitated and jagged and reminds me of discovering the kind of post-punk that can put anger into a monotone delivery. I can't tell if the vocals are double-tracked and backed by a gritty synth or if it's just how blown-out the recordings are. Track two is a cover of the (best) WARSAW / JOY DIVISION song, "The Drawback." The vocals don't try to do a dramatic Ian Curtis impression, and it's just a little bit slower than the original, so it comes off like an early RAMONES demo. It feels a lot like their own, and I don't hear imitation in it. If all their songs are variations on these, then two songs on a flexi might be good enough, but I'd like to hear more. (BW)
(Super Secret)

NEWTOWN NEUROTICS – "Kick Out the Tories/Mindless Violence"

Reviewing my favorite bands feels insane. Especially when they are *legendary*. I think most of the NEUROTICS stuff has been reissued by this point, and these tracks from their third single are two of their finest early songs. Both of these songs epitomize what makes the NEUROTICS so great: simple and familiar chord progressions topped with Steve Drewitt's uniquely expressive, smart, and witty (and still relevant!) lyrics, and that fucking non-stop kick drum! How can you not want to dance? How can you just sit there? It's pop music that's so real, so soulful, and yet still so vitriolic. I can listen to this band on repeat. It makes me feel. And dance. Thanks to No Plan Records, you don't have to drop $30 on this anymore, though it would still be well worth your money if you did. (MA)
(No Plan)

THE NICO MISSLE – "The Big Red Button" LP

Mostly mid-paced '70s style Midwestern punk/power pop mix from Ohio. The problem here is that it takes a few songs to get this one going. Namely all the way to song number four on the A-Side. "Let's Go Make Love" is a burner à la early UNDERTONES. The next tune keeps the speed and aggression balanced with the melodies. Other times they have a GALAXIE 500 / JESUS AND MARY CHAIN thing going on and even get psychedelic and downright LUBRICATED GOAT-like at points. Overall mostly solid, but they could ditch a few tracks. (JD)
(Quality Time)

THE NVS – "A Perfect Vision" CD

Snotty, catchy punk pop, has a classic West Coast punk feeling, like they would have played with the VANDALS or ADOLESCENTS if they existed in 1981. It also sounds like something from a skate video circa 1995, like they coulda been on Fat Wreck or Epitaph. They definitely have more of an early Epitaph sound than that shitty corporate punk veneer that ate that genre. Their poppier instincts are uncontainable, so if you have a weakness for pop punk with Frontier Records tinges, this will probably be just the ticket. Sal has a cool voice, somewhere between GWEN STEFANI and PENELOPE HOUSTON in a crazy way! The lyrics are personal, poetic, and radical, covering lost friends, female identity, and the fleeting reality of modern existence. Maybe if the NVS were based in LA instead of DC they would be Warped Touring relentlessly instead of releasing this swansong CD… (LG)
(Burn it Down)

OAF – "Consume" EP

Mid-tempo hate from the great white north, this record sounds like a trip to the dentist's office. Did the guitarist use a boss pedal that mimics the sound of the electric diamond-tipped file they use to grind off cavities? Is there even a guitar? What is the "Jewel of Africa" they're alluding to, and does it have something to do with the sick recorder/kazoo noise that separates the fast part and the breakdown on that track? How many times can I listen to this record before I don't wanna listen to music anymore? Five? Can someone help me out with a couple bucks? Love this record. For fans of: that awkward year period where you finally settle in to your 20s, realizing drinking legally is nowhere near as fun as drinking illegally, the love you have for your bandmates. (MW)
(Deranged)

OUTTA GAS – "Terrified" EP

Pretty simple three-piece pop punk from Brooklyn and just the way I like it. Not incredibly polished or sappy, cool lyrics, and pretty fucking fun. I bet two hundred dollars these guys love them the hell outta CRINGER. If I have to listen to my fair share of pop punk here at the compound, I'm glad I got sent this EP. It's pretty fucking good. (DZ)
(All in Vinyl / Dead Broke / Life on an Island)

PARANOYA – "Fragmente" CD

This quartet are very German. Not in that SLIME / DIE TOTEN HOSE Germanic way, much more the slightly weird, darker, off-kilter Duetsch punk stylings of an EA80,or RAZZIA (minus the latter's keyboards). Me, I'm a fan of the whole gamut, so this works for me. And if you don't get any of these (admittedly decidedly '80s) band references, do yourself a favor and check 'em all out. (RK)
(Elfenart)

KID CONGO & THE PINK MONKEY BIRDS – "La Araña es la Vida" LP

KID CONGO POWERS, one cool fucker, walks The Earth as a bona-fide guitar dominator. It's an unshakeable truth and only an idiot would argue. Truthfully, I haven't been wowed by many of THE PINK MOKEY BIRDS recordings (live, another story), but *La Araña es la Vida* exceeds expectations. The attack melds the guitar shatter that guys like CONGO and KIM SALMON pioneered with a frantic, now-sound groove that sounds right at home next to the INTELLIGENCE or even THEE OH SEES. CONGO's slathered-in-cool vibe vox win out, too. Wouldn't kick this one outta bed (see insert, it'll make sense). (MC)
(In The Red)

PRESSING ON – "No Defeat No Capitulation" 12"

When I was 19, I listened to shitloads of DEATHREAT (still do), pre-Jade Tree FROM ASHES RISE (not much anymore), and motivational youth crew (ehh, only sometimes), but never thought that I'd hear the first two elements join up with the third on the same record. Riffs, instrument tones, and guitar leads ripped straight from the Partners In Crime catalog come head on with "inspirational" riffs and lyrics and cheesy-as-fuck sloganeering choruses with gang vocals ("*Too many obstacles in my way / I'm breaking through! / I'm breaking through!*"), all in a sleeve that looks like something out of the React! Records catalog. I could do without the slower-side-of-mid-paced songs towards the end, but I'll take a few duds on a record that mostly makes feel energized in a way I haven't felt in years. I'm gonna be pissed if I find out they recently played the Bay and I missed it. (DG)
(Deranged / Even Worse / Way Back When)

PRISON – LP

The fact that this self-described "queer feminist migrant synth wave band" plays atmospheric post-punk might trigger a wave of rolled eyes from the jaded punks of 2016, but I don't get the impression that this LP is a simple genre exercise. If you can hang with the prominent, heavily reverbed vocals, you might discover a set of well composed and well executed tracks replete with spidery guitar lines and moments of ghostly keyboards. Similar effort was put into the packaging, a black-and-metallic-silver jacket with a poster and lyric sheet. The band hails from Copenhagen but sings mainly in Polish, and dedicates this LP to "all the people who fight all social normativities." A pleasant surprise. (CS)
(Saudade)

PRIVATE ROOM – "Life Com/Gourmet Pez"

PRIVATE ROOM contains the final lineup of WALLS, minus the singer, with vocal duties taken over by the drummer and bass player, and you can hear the musical trajectory, though so far I'd say PRIVATE ROOM is harsher. "Life Com" is a quick listen with a tone set by a dissonant one-chord chugging riff that goes up to a single note that plays a couple of times before dropping off and repeats for about two thirds of the song. The band does a few other things for the remaining half-minute, always returning to the "chorus" riff. Their version of MAN IS THE BASTARD's "Gourmet Pez" is one of those rare covers that transcends the original and is truly made into their own. Evidently, this is a sneak preview of an LP that will be out later in the year, but this band is worth hearing now. (DG)
(Iron Lung)

PULLING PUNCHES – "The Old Colors Are Dead" LP

Clean hardcore with optimistic tones, which

are quickly layered with disdain. PULLING PUNCHES move all over the hardcore map in an uncalculated way from punk to post to prog. It's out of control and schizophrenic for a few tracks before regaining its composure with melodic undertones. All is very well composed and respectable, for the genre. I can hardly recall the bands this reminds me of, but I'll say HOT WATER MUSIC, BRAID, SUNNY DAY REAL ESTATE. I found myself wishing for less angst and more unfiltered anger. The drummer is a monster. Grind some shit out. The raspberry splatter vinyl is rich, and the painting on the cover is off-kilter and haunting like an old *Choose Your Own Adventure* book. All told, their effort is a success. (JR)
(Creep)

QUITTER – "Altered Flesh" EP

This band somehow found the intersection of SCREAMERS and SIX FINGER SATELLITE buried deep in a pile of knuckle-dragging hardcore. The guy has the whine growl of a cartoon basement monster, and there are keyboards that goof without being goofy. Guitar riffs and drumbeats keep things pretty chugga chugga. I dig it. (MM)
(Blow Blood)

RADIO HEARTS – "Lot to Learn" EP

Poppy stuff, this RADIO HEARTS four song 7" EP. Aptly from the Long Beach suburb of Los Angeles, these RADIO HEARTS really kick out the pop punk tunes, so pop punky they even got a London, England based label to release it! They are like the new sound of 1979 earnest pop punk for the old timers festival circuit to have a new youngster band of upstarts to save punk rock for all the world. If I had creepers and a bleach streak running across my contrasting brown mullet, I would be pretty fucking pumped for these dudes, that is for sure. (GB)
(No Front Teeth)

RADIO HEARTS – "Tell You" EP

RADIO HEARTS are back, and it's like they never missed a beat. This is the shit. This band has always reminded me of the EXPLODING HEARTS without trying to imitate them. This is catchy as all hell and very much as rock'n'roll as it is punk. Four cuts and they're all A+. (KK)
(No Front Teeth)

RADIO VUDU – "Zagor, Charlotte E altre Avventure" CD

As far as I can make it, swell internationalist that I am, this quintet are Italian. That's my best educated guess, given their label's web address and the lyrics/credits, which all seem to be, in, er, Italian! What you do get, for sure, are ten tracks of maximum rock'n'roll, indeed. Very rock, with a dash of punk. Two guitars. Very rock. No metal. Very melodic. Sort of like UNWRITTEN LAW when they went major label. I like that period of UNWRITTEN LAW, FYI, same as I think that the STRAW DOGS were far superior to the FU's—though these guys are definitely way less metallic than STRAW DOGS and even have a ska number. Well worth indulging in, I reckon. Oh yeah, it also comes with a DVD, which as far as I can tell from my interpretive skills, is a "story of the band." (RK)
(KillerDogz Music Factory)

RAW BLOW – "Slow Choke" EP

This is some sad sack shit. Don't make the mistake that I did and read the lyrics. These folks should really find some new friends. Aside from that, the music is emotional melodic hardcore. It's pretty heavy but kind of slick. The five songs are all short. They move between singing (with some back up melodies and *whoooooohs*) and screaming, but in a pretty controlled way. It sounds strangely like a heavy, punkish version of the FOO FIGHTERS or something. (PA)
(Tor Johnson)

RIP – "Lekeitio 84" LP

Holy shit. What can I say about one of the best punk bands of all time? As soon as the needle drops, I feel overcome with a fake nostalgia for a time I never experienced but wish I did. This record is the first vinyl edition of the RIP tracks from a tape called "Spanish HC," released by a California label, 1985. It's a live recording of a show they played in their native Basque Country in 1984, featuring some songs that aren't on any other RIP vinyl releases (including a 4-Skins cover!). There is so much energy and rage captured in these tracks. I don't think I ever even noticed how much they were probably listening to DISCHARGE until I heard this live version of "Antipolitica." Taking in the finest punk and hardcore bands that came before them, RIP developed their own pounding yet catchy blend of hardcore punk and always had something interesting to say. This is a totally necessary record of easily one of the most superb old punk bands from Spain, and maybe the world. Comes with an amazing fanzine booklet featuring interviews with RIP members and information about their live shows. Rest in Power, Yul. (LT)
(Metadona)

SAINTS AND THE HELLIONS – "Brave Words and Bloody Knuckles" CD

A little greaser punk rock'n'roll on this four-song release. There are three very SOCIAL DISTORTION type numbers and a REVEREND HORTON HEAT type dittie. These guys are decent, not my favorite sound in 2016 but there are those who love it, and this is a band that pulls it off. (RL)
(Electric Eye Media)

SEGER LIBERTATION ARMY – "Innervenus Eyes" LP

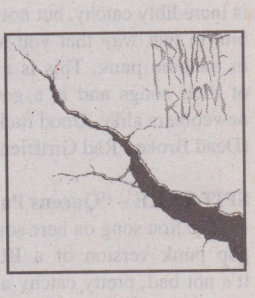
Very late '60s garage inspired by the BOB SEGER SYSTEM—which, y'know, was quite a bit *before* the Detroit dude copped out and did Chevy ads. Anyway, this is pretty good but comes off like it would be ideal on a 7" and not so much on an LP of BOB SEGER SYSTEM covers. Lots of swagger and Detroit-worship from members of BANTAM ROOSTER, the NEW BOMB TURKS, and the DIRTBOMBS. Though to their credit, there's a lot of heart on songs like "Get Down on Your Knees" and "Death Row." The cover of the anti-Vietnam War classic "2+2 = ?" is rather good. (JD)
(Big Neck)

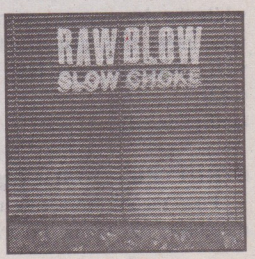
SLINGSHOT DAKOTA –"Their Dreams Are Dead, But Ours Is the Golden Ghost" LP

A vinyl repressing of this band's 2007 release, if you're a fan and confused. This is fairly synth heavy emo-pop. Maybe a little too emo for my black, dusty heart. For this just being a two-piece of keys and drums, though, it's pretty fucking full, and I can see the allure. They can be pretty catchy at times, and there are a few raging moments, but there's also a good dose of some formulaic emo chords. (DZ)
(Square of Opposition)

SNOWING – "That Time I Sat in a Pile of Chocolate (A Retrospective)" LP

The members of SNOWING were emo revivalists before there was an emo revival. The band broke up in 2011 and left only one album. This LP is a collection of all of their miscellaneous songs from different EPs, splits, and compilations. I feel like if you're into JAWBREAKER and the bands who try to sound like them, you would probably dig this record if you're open-minded enough. Honestly, I've never heard of this band, but this shit is decent. Broken down full chords, sad melodies, and songs about cutting your arms off because your ex-girlfriend started smoking cigarettes and is hanging out with some other dudes, sung in a high-pitched, somewhat whiny way. Some of the tracks on this LP are recorded in a pretty shitty quality,





which gives the songs a little more authenticity, I guess. The first pressing of this record sold out in pre-order, so Square of Opposition Records pressed 500 new records of it again. Overall, this is album is decent if you want depressing background music for a gloomy and rainy day. Recommended for fans of THE WORLD IS..., DOGS ON ACID, and BRAID. (DB)
(Square of Opposition)

THE SOVIETTES – "Rarities" LP

The SOVIETTES were a band that I saw plenty of times, but I never owned their records, so this collection is a good cross-section of a bunch of stuff I missed along the way. This record collects most of their EPs, a compilation track, and some unreleased demos for their third LP. They played pop punk / melodic punk in the vein of DILLINGER 4 with catchy vocal melodies that rival those of (but do not surpass) the FASTBACKS. When the women in this band sing the raspier notes, it almost sounds like THIS IS MY FIST or the DISTILLERS. (No shame. The DISTILLERS are sick). All of this shit is incredibly catchy, but not sugar sweet...it still has bite in that way that you always wish you'd hear in melodic punk. This is a near perfect collection of their songs and is a good record for fans and newcomers alike. Good fuckin' work! (GH)
(Dead Broke / Rad Girlfriend)

SPIT-TAKE – "Queens Pawn Game" EP

The first song on here sounds like an amateurish, pop punk version of a BUILT TO SPILL song. It's not bad, pretty catchy and all. The next couple songs are more straight pop punk, still pretty catchy. The last one gets a bit aggressive with that '90s indie rock quiet/loud between verse and chorus dynamic. All in all, a pretty good, short, lo-fi, pop punk record with enough character to make it worth listening to. (PA)
(Broken World / Ice Age / Shitty Present)

SPIT VITRIOL – "The Blood It Takes to Make the Breaks" EP

Slightly metallic and D-beat flavored punk from Portland. This is very reminiscent of a style that was highly popular ten to fifteen years ago, and I'm almost surprised to hear it again. Think FROM ASHES RISE but a little slower and less melodic. Vocals are strained and desperate, guitars are crunchy and down-tuned, and the production is crisp and clear. It doesn't pique my interest, but it's a solid EP. (MA)
(Insurgent)

STERILE MIND – "Hunted" EP

Six songs of dark, dirty, and abrasive hardcore out of the Bay Area. The drums keep the pace at a steady D-beat gallop—though this is not otherwise a D-beat band—with the occasional breakdown, while the drawn-out, gutteral screams rail over the malcontent riffs that match the musical aesthetic well. Nothing new, but satisfying nonetheless. (DG)
(self-released)

STRUTTER – "Will to Learn" EP

First record from this new-ish band featuring members of Texas favorites including GLUE, VAASKA, and IMPALERS. Right out the gate you are either going to mosh or puke. The guitar tone (just a touch of chorus pedal warble) here reminds me of the INDIGESTI LP just a little bit, but a bit more pogo-friendly as far as the rhythm section goes. "Busted" slowly pulls the rug out from under its culminating breakdown, starting with a sick vocal delivery and then slowing the tempo and skipping notes until you're left with bass feedback and tom hits stabbing at the remnants of a decayed rhythm. Things get even wilder on the B-Side. The guitar leads throughout "Outro/STRUT" are absolutely insane, the stuff of an italo-horror soundtrack on amphetamines. The lyrics are compelling, too, an absolute anxiety attack managing to pull in everything that's fucked up in one's life and the world at large to one track, presented somehow with some self-awareness. Grip it. (EW)
(Beach Impediment)

STUDY HALL – "Jackleen" EP

Wow, this is pretty cool. If you like your pop music a bit on the dark side and not overproduced, you will dig this one. It's mid-tempo and catchy and even very pretty at times. The B-Side is a memorable acoustic cut. Why do I think NOBUNNY? Why? (KK)
(Glad Fact / Outside the Circle)

SUDOR – "Enamorado De La Muerta Juvenil" LP

Come on punx, it's SUDOR. At this point, you should know what you're getting: timeless punk with a hardcore edge that addresses issues in contemporary Spain with wit, catchy melodies and boundless energy. The best of RIP, TEEN IDLES, and the CLASH tossed into a blender. Fuck, I shouldn't have to sell you this record because SUDOR are fucking amazing. If I have to, I will say that the DISCHARGE-tinged "Carne Blanda Para la Bestia" might be the best song that they've written yet, especially with the gloriously falling-apart solo. But fuck that, there shouldn't be any salesmanship needed. Buy this fucking record. (AU)
(Todo Destruido)

SUICIDE SYNDICATE – "Savage Barbarians Have Feelings Too!" CD

This Swedish combo reminds me a lot of DOA and their later era rock leanings and riffing. There's even a little Joey Shithead in the vocals. Maybe some TURBONEGRO as well but there's also dashes of double time thrashing at times. Anyways, this is OK. They don't have the urgency of DOA, but I'm sure these guys can rock a bar when they want to. (RL)
(Troglodyte)

SYNDROME 81 – "Desert Urbain" EP

Don't know where to start explaining how much I love this band. After a great demo and demo EP, killer split with LITOVSK, and the best song of 2015 on a comp, comes this follow up. Brest's S81 combines the best elements of Oi! and darker melodic punk, with forays into more HC territory in a way that only the French can to churn out a perfect punk stew of titanic proportions. Buy this record or be a fool. (JU)
(Foreign Legion)

TAIWAN HOUSING PROJECT – "Three Song Record" EP

I like when bands send letters with their records rather than a bland RIYL-filled one-sheet. This 45 is as cool as its pedigree would imply (people who have played in or with HARRY PUSSY / BROKEN TALENT / LITTLE CLAW / DAN MELCHIOR BAND and with members of TYVEK / WRITHING SQUARES playing in the live act), and if that grouping of capital letters doesn't make you wanna grab this without reading my words, then I'm not sure what to say. This started as a project with just Kilynn from LITTLE CLAW and Mark from BROKEN TALENT / HARRY PUSSY, which would be enough to encourage any live mind in modern America to move forth with an investigation, and on the evidence of this rager of a 45, the case is closed! On America, that is. Super sick guitar snarl wound up to the point of ridiculousness, layer upon layer of riffs and deconstructions of such things. "Maintenance of an Application" and "White Frosted" are total bona-fide hits, stadium filling levels of hits! Relentlessness and rhythm! Makes me want to start fifty bands, this sound destroys and resurrects rock'n'roll with the deftest hand. Total insurrection sound! I love it when singers sound like they are listing complaints but also could be detailing a new lettrist manifesto. Masterful delivery of ideas throughout! Then there's a ballad that gives Kilynn the opportunity to show her simultaneous devastating chanteuse-like voice, and yes, America the case is closed, this is the band we deserve. Off the pigs. (LG)
(M'Lady's)

TELEDENTE 666 – "Karen" LP

The cover features a creased-up photo of a 1970s wholesome teenage girl in a bedroom with stuffed toys. She is beaming with joy and perched behind a drumset... Judging from the LP title alone, could she be a Karen Carpenter fan girl? Did Karen make the teen girls of 1970s USA pick up drums? At any rate, TELEDENTE 666 is from France and play insidiously sick muscular punk that is ominous and wild. Sounds equally consumed by JG Ballard and Industrial Records, discordant snarled shards of guitar over brutalist rhythms and aggro-synth interrogations. The otherworldly future sci-fi scapes of CHROME but with a motorik beat and a focused thuggery that brings to mind miscreants of certain genres of garage moderne but also LEATHER NUN / 39 CLOCKS. Charismatic, devastating, realistic, the time is now! If you were consumed by TOTAL CONTROL and the last PIERRE ET BASTIEN LP, I guarantee you will also be eaten alive by these sounds, even if those groups operate in slightly different spheres. I absolutely love this record, have not been able to stop listening to it, and with these pathetic words demand that you buy it right now. Looks like the label is sold out, but lots of US distros seem to have this. Grab it punker. (LG)
(Le Turc Mecanique)

JIM THREAT AND THE VULTURES – "Afraid of the Dark" EP

Threat, as in Scotland's THREATS, in case you're an obsessive. Nowadays, with the VULTURES, Jim Threat offers up painfully standard barroom punk, indistinguishable from the lot. Four tunes heard

here, all punk'n'roll snoozers that make two and a half minutes feel like an eternity. I smiled when it ended…and I never smile. (MC)
(Dr. Strange)

UROCHROMES – "T.O.A.P." EP

How do you retain the fast'n'loose qualities of a great punk group while up against an inflexible and unresponsive percussive root? Two freaks and a drum machine in Western Massachusetts hold the key. Their union here is a joy, elevating UROCHROMES's take on USHC *du jour* to the alien and the sublime. The cold crack of the snare announces itself right from the outset, but we're quickly swept up into the groove—for once, the presence of the synthetic in the midst of flesh and bone is an asset, not a distraction. At moments the machine is obvious; at others, you could be listening to a live drummer; at the best, like at the conclusion of "Ugly People," it's a deeply disorienting (in)distinction between the two. Catch me rolling around in the uncanny valley of the backbeat. To overstress the drums is to do this group a disservice, though—this band is catchy, lyrically adept ("I Don't Wanna Be Like Me," instant sing-along classic!), they groove, they rage, Jackie Boy practically vomits his lyrics all over the place. You can stomp, you can creepy crawl, you can shake your ass. Risk-taking, intelligent, and idiosyncratic hardcore punk of the highest order. Sold out from the source, sold out from most distros, repress forthcoming. (GA)
(Lumpy)

VARUKERS – "How Do You Sleep???????" LP

A far cry from the desperate D-beat that forged their legacy in the early '80s, 2000's *How Do You Sleep???????* is a slick and streamlined professional hardcore record with metal guitars that could have just as easily been delivered by a bunch of middle aged Midwest bar hounds as by wizened anarcho-punks. Don't get me wrong, it's a fast and tight record…but there's nothing at all special about it. It's just…tired. It's 2016. I'm reviewing a sterile, derivative, second rate hardcore record that was released sixteen years ago by a legendary band who arguably reached their peak sixteen years before that. Life choices. (WN)
(Matus)

WITCHING WAVES – "Crystal Cafe" LP

Somehow I've managed to miss out until now, but this London-based three-piece is worth my attention and maybe yours, too, pending your feelings on the following: Found in the increasingly vast overlap of post-punk and "indie," WITCHING WAVES may be drinking from the same waters as GRASS WIDOW in the past or MARGY PEPPER in the present. I particularly appreciate the use of alternating male/female vocals, dialoguing with SONIC YOUTH, and on that note, maybe a little SAUNA YOUTH, too. Totally recommended, and I'm definitely keeping it near my record player after this review is over. One more reason why London punk doesn't suck (anymore). (LT)
(HHBTM)

WORLD BE FREE – "The Anti-Circle" CD

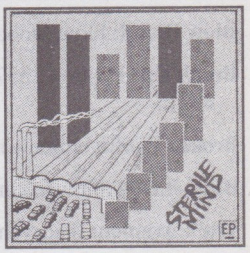
Considering the pedigree of WORLD BE FREE (Scott from TERROR / BURIED ALIVE, Sammy from JUDGE / YOUTH OF TODAY, Arthur from GORILLA BISCUITS, and members who were in STRIFE and DESPAIR, as well as production from Walter, whose pretty much been in every notable NYHC youth crew band, and lyrical help from Ben Cook and Nick Jett), I was expecting something a little different, but what I got was a cool reimagining of a certain era in hardcore history. Musically, this definitely reminds me of the more upbeat fare of the time, like the punchier CIV tracks or *FTTW* era H2O. WORLD BE FREE as a throwback is a rad twist on each member's participation in the heyday of Youth Crew and NYHC, all the way from the CD label being a nod to the *New York City Hardcore* comp label to the band photos being taken from live shots in the '80s and '90s. "Breakout or Busted" is a knuckle dragger, and "Sammy's Mirror" has got a *Four on the Floor* DAG NASTY vibe, which I like. If you're into GORILLA BISCUITS, H2O, and CIV and wanna hear a mean ass vocalist rage on the tracks, this is for you. For fans of: friends in high school that had kids, date at a fancy restaurant with a norm. (MW)
(Revelation)

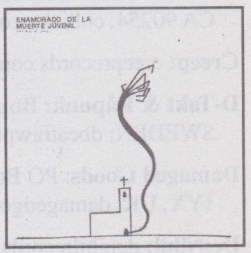
V/A – "Dumptruck Records Volume 1" LP

The FUCKYEAH BABIES started things off nicely with a catchy little trashy number. If there is a theme, it's probably mid-tempo, melodic, catchy punk/hardcore. Like most compilations, it's got its hits and it's got its misses. Where it misses, I think it sounds like fairly common commercial punk. Think BLINK-182 or BAD RELIGION. Harsh criticism, I know. That said, there are enough hits that I feel pretty good giving it the "thumbs up." Other standouts for me include RYAN MICHAEL KELLER, SCREAMING MIMIS, TV STATIC, and DIRTY FEW. Comes with a cool little color fanzine. (KK)
(Dumptruck / Sweet Lodge)

V/A – "No Friends Magazine Vol. 2" flexi

There is a Chicago-centric focus to this flexi, but sonically it is all over the place. It starts with a remix of a 2014 LP track from SIAMESE TWINS. "Alone" is touched up by a Chicago synth pop artist named WINGTIPS, throwing on all of the most straight-up new wave trappings. We got heavy square wave synths, the drum machine going off with 16th-note hi-hats, DX7 stabs, handclaps, and all that. This remix sounds a little saccharine to my ears. On the flip, this flexi features three bands, starting with another of Chicago's own, PLASTIC. "Rubber Brain" is in and out in less than a minute with some bass driven synth-punk not too dissimilar from early DIGITAL LEATHER or BLACK BUG. MACE are up next to present some tough-ass hardcore—not tough in the "TERROR headlining another all male HC fest" sense but in the *truly* "fed up with bearing the shit of a toxic society" sense. The vocalist sounds deeply pissed, and I look forward to hearing more on a less wobbly format. Chicago's UFUX close it out with a dense and noisy track, the bass channeling the creep of the CRAMPS then bending into a riff that sounds torn from a KARP cut, a noise rock song that actually benefits from the hissy limitations of this floppy medium. Again, it's all over the place. It is cool to see a wide stylistic and scenic spectrum presented here. Where the first *No Friends* split looked outward, pulling in readership from the millions of DUMPERS and AUSMUTEANTS fans across planet Earth, this one seems to look inward and spring some Chicago trax on this new audience. Whether the listener is going to be overwhelmed by the variety here is TBD; the sequencing doesn't exactly hold your hand and walk you through the Second City. (EW)
(No Friends)





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Anstalt: anstalt.punk.blogspot.com

Anthems of the Undesirable: theundesirable.net

Austin Town Hall: athrecords.bandcamp.com

Beach Impediment: beachimpedimentrecords.bigcartel.com

Beast: 7 Rue de la Motte Fablet, 35000 Rennes, FRANCE, beastrecords.free.fr

Big Neck: 39877 Thomas Mill Rd., Leesburg, VA 20175, bigneckrecords.com, bigneckrecords@usa.net

BinsTwins: facebook.com/antibodiesuk

Blow Blood: blow-blood.tumblr.com

Break Up: PO Box 15372, Columbus, OH 43215

Broken World: brokenworldmedia.bandcamp.com

Burn it Down: tnvdc.com

The Cavemen: thecavemennz.bandcamp.com

Cephia's Treat: Cephiastreat.com

Collision Course: POB 865 Hermosa Beach, CA 90254, collisioncourserecords.com

Creep: creeprecords.com

D-Takt & Råpunk: Box 55, 832 21 Frösön, SWEDEN; dbeatrawpunk.blogspot.com

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De:Nihil: denihilrecords.com

Dead Broke: 139 Huber Ave, Holbrook, NY 11741, deadbrokerecords.com, deadbrokerec@gmail.com

Deranged: 2700 Lower Rd, Roberts Creek, BC CANADA V0N 2W4, derangedrecords.com

Dirt Cult: dirtcultrecords.com

Dirtnap: 5857 SE Foster Road, Portland, OR 97206, dirtnaprecs.com

Don Giovanni: PO Box 628, Kingston, NJ 08528, dongiovannirecords.com

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Dumptruck: dumptruckpress.com

East Grand: eastgrandrc.com

Electric Eye Media: PO BOX 6105, Scottsdale, AZ 85261

Elfenart: elfenart.de

Even Worse: evenworserecords.com

Ever/Never: evernever-records.bandcamp.com

Extreme Smoke 57: seitanik@hotmail.com

Farewell: Steinbruchstr. 10, 30629 Hannover, GERMANY; punkdistro.de

FDH: fdhrecords.com

Feral Ward: feralward.com

Fistolo: fistolo.com

Foreign Legion: ourwayoflife.storeenvy.com

Fucking Virgins: fuckingvirgins.nl

Glad Fact: gladfact.com

Going Underground: 1312 19th St., Bakersfield, CA 93301

Goober: thedrafted.com

Hardcore Survives: hardcore-survives.com

HHBTM: P.O. Box 742, Athens, GA 30603, hhbtm.com

Howlin' Banana: 11 rue Auguste Poullain, 93200 Saint-Denis, FRANCE, howlinbananarecords.com

Ice Age: icexage.storenvy.com

In The Red: intheredrecords.com

Insurgent: facebook.com/insurgentrecords

Iron Lung: PO Box 95521, Seattle, WA 98145, lifeironlungdeath.blogspot.com

Kangaroo: henkangeroo@gmail.com

Kibou: kibourecords@hotmail.co.uk

KillerDogz Music Factory: killerdogzmusicfactory.it

Le Turc Mecanique: leturcmecanique.bandcamp.com

Life On An Island: lifeonanislandrecords.org

Lumpy Records: spottedrace.bigcartel.com

M'Ladys: taiwanhousingproject.bigcartel.com

Matus: Lichtenbergstr. 6, 37075 Göttingen, GERMANY, matusrecords.de

Max Recordings: maxrecordings.com

Thee Melomen: theemelomen.bandcamp.com

Metadona: metadonarecords.com

Mighty Mouth: almostready.com

Mindless: mindlessattack.bandcamp.com

Minnesconsin: minnesconsinrecords.tumblr.com

No Friends: PO Box 12343, Chicago, IL 60612, nofriendszine@gmail.com, nofriendszine.com

No Front Teeth: nofrontteeth.co.uk

No Plan: noplanrecords.blogspot.com

Outside the Circle: outsidethecirclerecords.bigcartel.com

P.Trash: ptrashrecords.com

Pain of Mind: Haltenhoffstr. 14, 30167 Hannover, GERMANY; pain-of-mind.com

Pizza Days: pizzadaysrec.blogspot.com

Quality Time: qualitytimerecords.bandcamp.com

Rad Girlfriend: radgirlfriendrecords.com

Retard: 36 rue Camille Pelletan, 35000 Rennes, FRANCE; retardrecords.bandcamp.com

Revelation: revelationrecords.com

Rumbletowne: rumbletowne.com

Rust & Machine: rustandmachine.storenvy.com

Safety Meeting: safetymeeting.net

Saudade: www.facebook.com/saudadevinyl

Shitty Present: theshittypresent.tumblr.com

Six Weeks: sixweeksrecords.com

Slope: 1430 N Cave Creek Road, Sunnyslope, AZ 85020, Sloperecords.com

Snuffy Smiles: 9-16-5-402 Kamitsurama Honcho, Minamiku, Sagamiko, Kanagawa 252-0318 Japan

Sophomore Lounge: sophomoreloungerecords.com

Spirit Of The Streets: oi-punk.com

Square of Opposition: squareofopposition.com

Sterile Mind: sterilemind.bandcamp.com

Super Secret: supersecretrecords.com

Sweet Lodge: sweetlodgerecordings.bandcamp.com

Threat From the Past: give-em-hell.com

Todo Destruido: tododestruido.blogspot.com

Tor Johnson: torjohnsonrecords.com

Troglodyte: transubstans.com/suicide_syndicate.html

Twistworthy: twistworthy.com

Urban Folk Art: www.urbanfolkart.com

Voodoo Rhythm: Wankdorffeldstrasse 92, 3014 Bern, SWITZERLAND, voodoorhythm.com

Way Back When: waybackwhenrecords.com

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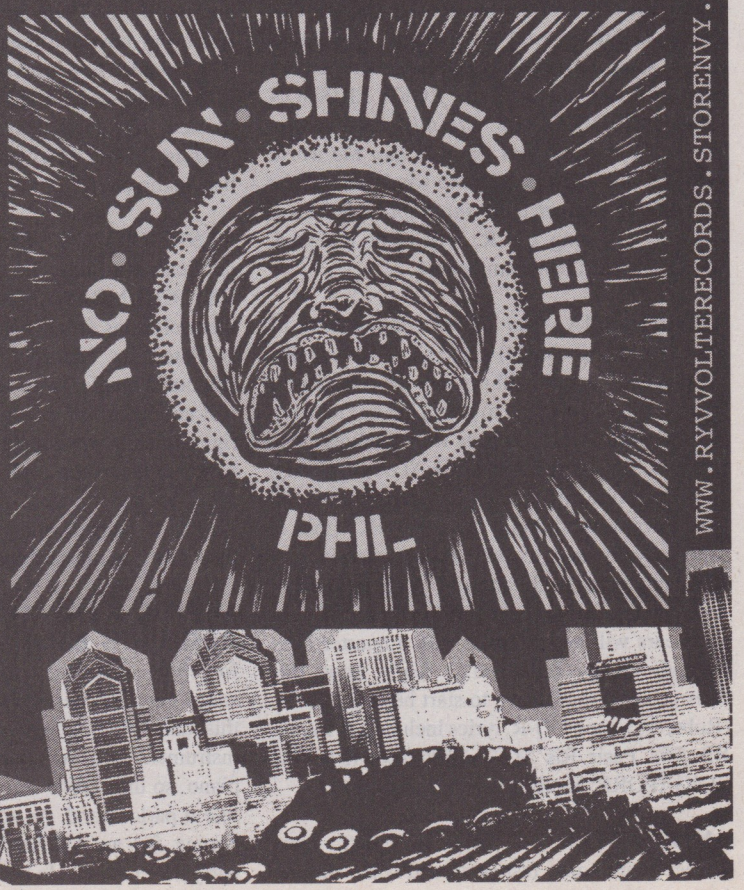

DEMOS

Send cassettes and CD-Rs to: MRR Attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. CD-Rs with no artwork will not be considered. Reviews by Matt Badenhop, Heather Blotto, Robert Collins, Michael de Toffoli, Legs, Mike Leslie, Ricky Martyr, and Alex Turner.

ADAM HEALTON + THE SITUATION – *III: Hymns To Astaroth* – I don't know what this is, but I definitely like it. Psychedelic weirdo space-fi indie pop, MILK CULT-esque sound collages, and general mind-fuckery of the highest order. Brilliant or not, I contend that most of this was created while Mr. Healton was without pants. (Robert) (13-song cassette, lyrics not included, pfgrecords.bandcamp.com)

ANGRIES – Too slow to be hardcore but too angry to be pop punk. There's a common thread with the GITS (and a GITS cover on the tape), but there's also a dark melodic quality and vocals on the track "Thundercloud" that channel the style of bands like MASSHYSTERI or NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS. The singer nails singing as well as screaming. Definitely something to check out if you are into any of the influences here. (Heather) (11-song cassette, lyrics included, ang-ries.bandcamp.com)

ANIMALS & MEN – *Where Are All Your Friends?* – '70s anarcho punk by way of '60s psych rock reborn in the twenty teens. This sounds just like a crop of irreverent aged punks should sound, which is to say: however the fukk they want it to sound. Think ROKY ERIKSON meets POISON GIRLS. *"Is this the way that the world ends? Is this the way that the world ends? Is this the way that the world ends? Not with a bang but with a driving stupid."* Brilliant. (Robert) (12-song CD-R, lyrics not included, animalsandmen.bandcamp.com)

ANNIHILATIA – *An Introduction* – Lots of punks (myself included) avoid CD-R demos like the plague. I simply will not buy them because I know I will never listen to them, but our narrow-minded elitist ways keep us from finding gems like this. Singapore's ANNIHILATIA play burly, churning politically fueled hardcore with equal ears towards traditional Japanese HC (this is especially evident in the vocals), classic foot stomping street punk, and ripping heavy metal. It seems like an unlikely combination, but your open ears will be rewarded with a quarter hour of high energy brilliance. I really hope this doesn't mean that I have to start buying CD-Rs. (Robert) (5-song CD-R, lyrics included, I. Imran, Blk 754 Pasir Ris St. 71, #06-126, (510754) SINGAPORE, annihilitia.bandcamp.com)

ANTICLUSTER – This is crust from Greece, with some fast parts and some dirging breakdowns. Seven songs, of which two are in Greek and two of which are BLACK FLAG covers. The lyrics are anti-capitalist and about a bleak future and remind me of what DYSTOPIA sang about. It makes a lot of sense considering Greece's current political climate. (Mike) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, anticluster.bandcamp.com)

A-TOWN SLUTS – *King Allentown's Lehigh Valley Scenester Club* – No frills punk rock, fast and stupid. I assume based on the title alone that my assessment of this disc will get me written off as an elitist and/or hipster but, fukk man, I've been listening to different incarnations of this animal for three decades now, and if you aren't going to be original (and this is *punk* after all, so originality is clearly not a requirement) then please at least be interesting. A-TOWN SLUTS exist in some form or another in every metropolis in America. They don't suck by any means—songs are played nice and tight, approach is irreverent and sometimes even funny, you can even tap your toe every now and then…they are just there. Their pals come to their shows, and every now and then they get to open for a "big" band. They just…are. This is what we get to adhering to the rigid confines of our chosen musical subculture. This is classic rock. (Robert) (9-song CD-R, lyrics not included, atownsluts.bandcamp.com)

AUSTERITY – British-minimalist-dancey-political-post-punk. In the vein of WIRE, the EX, CHUMBAWAMBA. To fully qualify themselves as an art band, one of the members is listed as Management/Ideology/Concepts/Coyote Wrangler. Two long songs, a lyric zine, and another short zine/manifesto. Doing things right, wish it was longer. Bonus punk point for listing a bandcamp page on the tape that doesn't seem to exist. (Alex) (2-song cassette, lyrics included, subcomandantecrouton@gmail.com, facebook.com/austeritypunk)

AWEFUL KANAWFUL & HIS RUBBER HUSBAND'S BAND – *Brave As Hits* – 21 forgettable old-timey soda fountain rockabilly songs outta Rochester. A big difference between this and other garage bands is that the lead instrument is a very jangly acoustic sounding piano, so they come across sounding even more like a parlor band. As soon as I heard it, I was hoping for an ANDREW WK break, but the party never starts. He has a great voice, the band is tight, the songs are good Elvis clones, but is it too much to ask for at least a little psycho in that billy? I mean, this is a punk magazine, right? (Michael) (21-song cassette, lyrics not included, jellymusicinc.bandcamp.com)

BEAST – This is mid-tempo driving punk with some soaring guitar leads. All the players are pretty interesting, but what really stand out are the vocals. They remind me a bit of Sweden's HOLOGRAMS in that they are sung, low, quite haunting, and somewhat pained. BEAST are true freaks expressing their view on this square world. (Mike) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, bayareabeast.bandcamp.com)

BEHAVIOR / MAXWELL GENDERS – A few tracks to complement their recent LP on Iron Lung, LA No Wavers BEHAVIOR continue to drop bombs on the world of contrived and angular noisy punk. More good stuffs to be found here. Stark and minimal synth soundscape(s) from MAXWELL GENDERS on the flip. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, Squid Records, 1814 Hi Point St., Los Angeles, CA 90035, info@squidrecords.info)

THE BLACK CHEERS – *Sick Gun* – Melodic (not pop) punk from Boston. Snotty lead vocals and rock club ready tracks, this is an act tailor-made for the starter punk set. I know that sounds like a slag, but in the world of reverb and distortion and goth rehash and more-something-than-everything-else, it's actually refreshing to hear a quality punk rock band. So there. (Robert) (9-song CD-R, lyrics not included, theblackcheers.bandcamp.com)

BLURT – *Beneath Discordant Skies* – My first thought was "don't these dummies know there's a pretty legendary band called BLURT?" And then I listened…it's the same BLURT. Someone tell these weirdos to send actual releases in for review instead of burned CD-Rs, but until they do, *killer* art punk/No Wave from a camp that is rightfully well versed in the genres. Ted Milton's sax is as piercing and challenging as ever, though you aren't quite going to find anything entering "The Fish Needs A Bike" territory. Pleasantly shocked that this outfit is still active, but not at all surprised at the level of quality. Once a weirdo… (Robert) (10-song CD-R, lyrics not included, blurt.bandcamp.com)

BOG BODIES – *Where Do the Nether-Velvet Slashings End & Where Does Orgasm Begin?* – Ahhh…the twisted electro-cacophony of BOG BODIES. It's the third tape I've encountered by them, and this time I think shit's gotten even weirder. For the uninitiated, it's rhythmically spastic, atonal, convulsing punk that makes you feel dizzy and like you might puke. All electronics, no strings or drums. It might just be NINE INCH NAILS played at 78rpm, but with all of the pop sensibilities removed. (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, bogofbodies.bandcamp.com)

BRUISER – *Common Era E.P.* – This is very '90s-era DC hardcore: Noisy, weird chords. It will kind of give you a sad feeling. The instruments soar around each other and never really follow the same path, which I enjoy. It reminds me a bit of TINY HAWKS. This is good on a rainy day. It also came with a bag of hair. (Mike) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, broozybois.bandcamp.com)

CHARLATAN – *Supermax* – Dismal electronic goth music made under the clouds and meant to be played in the shadows. In the realm of modern reinterpretations of these dated sounds, CHARLATAN connects with about half of this release. "Empire Comes Home" is a particularly transfixing number, but many of these tracks just...exist. Worth it for the winners, though. (Robert) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, charlatansounds.com)

CIBORGUE – *Neurose Digital* – 100% fidelity-free noise punk madness. Not recommended for the easily nauseated or fans of actual music, but readers and mutants who like to keep their "music" raw and unattainable will be very, very pleased. This one is next level. (Robert) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, poparrrgh@gmail.com)

COMMANDO – *Come Out Fighting* – Rochester's COMMANDO have the same driving energy and vocal quality of MARKED MEN but lean more toward rock than pop. The guitars burn with rich overdrive and the drumming keeps things urgent. Nothing groundbreaking but still catchy and fresh sounding. Definitely recommended. (Matt) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, morepowertapes@gmail.com)

CONMAN – Hardcore with a garage tinge and some seriously next level vocals. Not some effects nonsense (that would be too easy), Toronto's CONMAN sound like they have just fukkn had enough. These screams are disgusted, and they do battle with the not-quite-distorted-enough guitar in a way that puts the whole session on edge. The tracks are fast and weird hardcore punk (nothing confusing there), but the presentation puts this one over the top. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, conman-to.bandcamp.com)

DEAD NEIGHBORS – Up-tempo, driving post-punk with effects on the vocals and cool, vaguely philosophical lyrics. You might say it's influenced by MISSION OF BURMA. It holds onto being melodic while still going on weird post-punk rhythmic tangents. I don't smoke weed, but this would probably be an excellent tape to listen to on weed, if you're into that. Plenty of high-energy instrumental breaks to keep the momentum going, too. (Heather) (12-song cassette, lyrics included, deadneighbors.bandcamp.com)

DUMB VISION – Killer fuzzed-out college rock in the vein of FUZZ (now reference) or DINOSAUR JR. (then reference). (Robert) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, 1315 E. Mifflin St., Madison, WI 53704, dumbvision.bandcamp.com)

EERIE – Dreary punk with morose moaning vocals and that perfectly faked '80s driving goth sound. Sixteenth hi-hats and a solid flanged bass line, guitars that echo in the rafters, playing nary a chord…I guess they've perfectly recreated the contemporary recreations of a by-gone sound, which oddly time stamps their sound with the current decade. Use Bay Area's the NEW FLESH for a comparison. If this is the sound you're after, then you can hardly do much better. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, Lost In Fog c/o 83 Pender St., Preston 3072, Victoria Australia, lostinfogdistro.bigcartel.com)

EMPTY BEINGS – Up-tempo dark punk from Pittsburgh that nails it. The vocals are velvety and are delivered through a decent amount of reverb, creating a sound within the same misty realm as SWANN DANGER but less dramatic and more punk. There is also a bit of classic CHRISTIAN DEATH influence. The drums are heavy and the guitar does some dissonant five-and-a-half-step "devil's interval" chords. The real mix tape song on this demo is "Mixed State," with the disco beat and a snare drum that is loud as shit and almost sounds like an industrial-style drum machine snare tone. Feet cannot resist tapping to this snare tone. The goth punks just wanna dance (alone, in the dark) and this band seems to get that. (Heather) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, emptybeings.bandcamp.com)

EXIT HIPPIES / SUNCHILDRENSUN – *Live From Transcentral* – Are you ready? Total psychedelic noise-punk assault from EXIT HIPPIES. A chaotic live presentation of the mania they are well known for, constantly pushing the boundaries of what is acceptable and what is music. Their track(s?) here are predictably shrouded in distortion, making the whole thing sound like it's being broadcast on a radio frequency that's always a little out of reach. SUNCHILDRENSUN? Just a fukkn mess; by divine design, of course. Chaotic live recording of a band that uses clean guitars, excessive percussion, and electronics to deliver a knife straight to the throat of hardcore punk convention. You think you know music? (Robert) (?-song cassette, lyrics not included, Black Konflik, PO Box 28, 27600 Raub, Pahang MALAYSIA, warcloudrecs@gmail.com)

FIZZED – *1st* – Soaring, epic, and overproduced indie pop in the vein of MERCURY REV and the like, but someone will hear the garage influence and probably say they sound like VELVET UNDERGROUND. Some tracks, for sure, and the singer comes off as perfectly pompous (I mean that in a good way because it suits the sound very well—he commands attention and owns his position). Mayhaps this ain't the best thing to be in a punk rag, but this FIZZED band is ruling right now. (Robert) (7-song cassette, no lyrics, worldofbirdsrecords.com)

GLUT – *Showing Teeth* – Beefy punk from New Orleans. Plenty of straightforward, hard driving riffs, with tinges of '80s UK punk and the slightly more epic hardcore US shits from the early '00s; two spheres of influence that complement each other nicely. Vocals are gruff, guitars are tight, songs are good. (Robert) (7-song cassette, no lyrics, glut504.bandcamp.com)

HAIRLONG N FREAKY – *Disco 'n Speaky by Otto and Christy* – Otto's weirdo electro plays really well under Christy's awkward "speaky" spoken word, with lines like *"the more I see Morrissey, the more I see, the more I see."* These art-freakers might come across as ironic at first, but I honestly think that they're being truthful. You'll definitely smile at it, and even if you laugh, they're so far advanced in their freakiness that they won't care. Also they drew me this weird and beautiful sketch of a shirtless mustache man. That doesn't have anything to do with the music, just wanted to share. (Michael) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, codyage@gmail.com)

HARD BODIES – Frigid sounds for a generation struggling to rediscover the golden age of synth before despair was pretentious. Ireland's HARD BODIES fall somewhere between SUICIDE and JOY DIVISION, and while their sound is clearly deliberate, the hypnotic repetition of "Getaway" is a winner right out of the gate, and the tape gets better from there, integrating the heavy electronics of mid-'80s EBM subtly into the mix. Fans of the uncontrollable explosion of retro synth/cold-wave music can hardly do better than this one. (Robert) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, hardbodiesmusic@gmail.com, hard-bodies.bandcamp.com)

HEAT RASH – Discordant, distorted, and dissonant guitars (two of them, but it sounds like more), overly indulgent vocals that wail and moan (their sometimes lack of direction is my only real complaint), and an approach that conjures decades past and aged punks' penchant

for tortured, pedal-laden rock sounds. Well done, young punks. (Robert) (7-song cassette, no lyrics, heatrash.bandcamp.com)

JJ DOLL – Melodic, poppy hardcore from New York that leans heavily into rock'n'roll vibes without ever falling all the way in. The songs are founded in conventional hardcore and peppered with short rock solos, while the vocals enact a fun, bratty, and over the top style that perfectly complements both leanings of the band. There's a lot to like about this tape, but it never quite added up to something I found exciting. I'm sure there are people out there who will really dig it, though. (Ricky) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, d4mtlabsinc.bandcamp.com)

MOLEDEBATER – *Stating the Obvious* – MOLEDEBATER is definitely pop punk, but it's ugly, so it can be listened to without a certain level of guilt. Two-piece, guitar/bass/vox plus a drummer, who strike me as not handsome or coordinated guys, so we won't have to worry about them doing any syncopated jumps or cashing in sponsorship deals from PacSun. These two sound like outcast losers that had an ear for pop music and a stench for fun, idiot punk rock. (Michael) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, moledebater.bandcamp.com, facebook.com/moledebater)

MORBITAL – *смерть только нацало* – This music is in the grind/metal genre. The drumming is mostly fast and at times feels played in reverse! This group is from Russia,and sings in their native language with a low and echoey singer. Their logo looks like it is made of tarantula legs in that black metal way. I looked at pictures of dirt bikes while listening to this one. (Mike) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, morbital.bandcamp.com)

NAILED DOWN – *1993–2014* – Legendary Aussie thrash/grind/powerviolence mutants. File alongside equally legendary forebearers like CROSSED OUT and CAPITALIST, but NAILED DOWN always had a bit more shit punk coursing through their veins. As the title suggests, this (by no means complete) collection spans 21 years and includes recordings from their first ever performance in 1993. For purists only, perhaps, or hopefully for young punks who need a lesson. (Robert) (35-track cassette, lyrics not included, grindplanetrecords@gmail.com, sukumarecords@yahoo.com)

NANCY REAGAN DEATH SQUAD – *The Complete Recordings* – This tape says it was recorded in 2004–2006, but how timely to release it now in prescient anticipation of Nancy Reagan's actual death! I hope they call their next tape *Dead at 94* or something. Anyway, it's more than just named after some shit from the '80s. The cover art is a spoof on the CIRCLE JERKS guy (with Nancy Reagan's freaky head glued on) and the CIRCLE JERKS reference lurks within the sounds of the songs, too. L.A. '80s punk style, played at a slightly more brutal pace, less desperate, and more professional. You don't get the feeling these kids are degenerate enough to fit in on the set of the original *Suburbia* movie, but they definitely know how to shred. (Heather) (17-song cassette, lyrics not included, tzglitter@gmail.com)

NEGATIVE RAGE – *If You're a Punk I Don't Wanna Be One* – It pisses you off that NEGATIVE RAGE is a band and they like that. The title perfectly sums up the amount of negativity that they have throughout these thirteen songs. The whole thing is snotty hardcore with a bratty attitude, and they don't give a *shit* what you think. The saxophone is like a middle finger, like they *want* you to have a problem with it. On "I'm So Sick of You," they exclusively repeat those words and drone into a bummer bad time. So *fuck you,* NEGATIVE RAGE. Fuck you all and keep it up. Everyone could always use a little more negativity in their stupid lives. (Michael) (13-song cassette, lyrics not included, cody_cross@hotmail.com)

NEW BERLIN – Stripped down mid-paced carefree garage punk shits from southern Texas. More subdued than the SPITS, but you get a similar don't-give-a-shit vibe. Top Track of the tape, and perhaps the entire month: "Hardcore Punk." (Robert) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, newberlin.bandcamp.com)

NERVVRAK – *Don't Need This Shit* – Furious and fierce rippers from smack in the middle of Sweden, NERVVRAK have captured the energy of early '00s fastcore, sharpened its teeth, and made it sound brand new. Absolute creamers like "Frödirrektivet" drop mind melting riffs in your lap with a casual precision, and the vocals are raspy, strained, and always on point. Also, the shit is fukkn *fast*. Winner. (Robert) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, nervvrak.bandcamp.com)

NO MARTYR – *Personal Damage* – Lurching, snotty California punk fucking rock. The tracks are pretty straightforward, but the presentation is what sells it. This sounds like the band is putting forth maximum effort to crank out relatively simple tunes, and the result is anxious and commands attention. Really good stuff. (Robert) (8-song CD-R, lyrics not included, nomartyr.bandcamp.com)

OLD CITY – Urgent, gentrification/apocalypse post crust from Portland with hints of melodic Oi! à la CRIMINAL DAMAGE. The sound quality of this tape is superb. If you like what's up in Portland right now, you should get this. (Legs) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, $5 c/o Dan Lawlor 1804 N Cramer St. Portland, OR 97217)

OSTAVKA – This is French, best described as post-punk. Has that chorus bass and guitar sound that I so associate with the CURE, but it also busts into more rock and roll riffs at times. The vocals are sung in English with a fair amount of reverb and with a pretty strong wail. The whole thing (three songs), gives off a feeling of desperation and sadness. Can't wait to hear more. (Mike) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, boudoumeterror@riseup.net)

PERSONAL BEST – *Loaf of Bread Rising EP* – All these songs are entirely different genres, and the only thing that links them together is the dry, trebly Strat. The tape starts with a catalyst doom song, then into math rock, then onto a groove metal cover of "Low Rider" by WAR. All on this thin twangy git-tar. The second side has a surf jangle tune, a garage punk song, then ends with this big coming-of-age indie punk song. It's either so diverse that it's genius, or it's so scattered that they should start six different side projects. Wait…holy shit! I think I just described WEEN! Is it?!?! Is PERSONAL BEST the next WEEN???!!! (Michael) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, personalbestband@yahoo.com, personalbestmusic.com)

PLASTIC – *2.0 EP* – Synth-darkwave, but still definitely hardcore punk. Barking hardcore vox with that HR-esque urgency necessary to fit in every word of his manifesto. Very thunky, blitz-picked pogo bass that keeps it punk, but with a tremolo synth and drums for a goth tint. Well-made and atmospheric and at times comes across like old *Hammer Horror* on the good songs. On the lame songs it sounds like the boss level of an Atari game. (Michael) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, thisisanimatedmusic@gmail.com, animatedmusic.bandcamp.com)

PROUD PARENTS – *Sharon is Karen* – Jangly, reverb-y indie pop. It's pretty infectious and has the feeling of dark-side-of-life pop that reminds you that it's still probably related to punk. It has a '60s influence (tambourines!), but is not as campy or over-the-top as other current '60s pop revival bands. It has something in common with the REIGNING SOUND, but without the whiney, affected vocals. One or two of the poppier songs are stuck in my head. (Heather) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, proudparentsband.bandcamp.com)

QUITMAN – This tape is a combo of the weirdness of bands like SPACE TRASH and SPIT-TAKE and "CCR played on the wrong speed" sound. Made in the swamp. Like an art swamp where intentionally indulgent art rock might sound pretty good? (Legs) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, 716-449-7396, turnuptuneout@hotmail.com)

RADIATION RISKS – The first two tracks on this tape are especially great hooky and gritty

punk, like something outta New York or Detroit in the late '70s. The vocalist's style is reckless and weird and adds a touch of sleaze to their sound. He oddly reminds me of the singer from LIFE'S BLOOD sometimes, but don't be misdirected by that comparison. This is not hardcore *at all*, though there are a couple of ripping fast songs. The sax actually adds a great flavor to the mix, and there's some cool keyboard stuff in a few songs. I kind of wish the rest of the tape was like the first two songs, but I'm hoping the rest of it will grow on me. Check it out! I bet this band has more great stuff in store. (Matt) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, morepowertapes@gmail.com)

SANCTUM – *2005–2008* – Churning stenchcore from the Washington state, SANCTUM left us with a scant few releases before imploding, all of which are collected on this tape. Filthy down-tuned crust with gratuitous bass bombs and guttural vocals, the whole thing runs like a soundtrack to an apocalyptic urban wasteland. File under "for fans of: BOLT THROWER, AMEBIX, STORMCROW, etc." (Robert) (20-song cassette, lyrics not included, Black Konflik, PO Box 28, 27600 Raub, Pahang MALAYSIA, blacxkonflik.blogspot.com)

SLURS – Fast and forceful Canadian punk distinguished by a relentless four on the floor drum attack and sharp guitars bashing out '80s Midwest hardcore open chords with ease. Smart, timeless, and infectious jams. Top notch. (Robert) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, c/o Alex Parrott, 645 Cambridge St., Winnipeg, MB R3M 3G1 CANADA, slurs.bandcamp.com)

SNAKES ON PCP – *Gyrlls* – Dance-punk with an avant-garde metal mindset. They have the same mean-spirited dark humor funk as MR. BUNGLE, but with a sound that they stick to, rather than pogoing between funk and thrash metal. Think NUCLEAR RABBIT mixed with the sassiness and sarcasm of CSS, all with the femergy of LE TIGRE. Slapping pog-wah bass with up-chunk funk guitar that hits hard, crunchy distortion when they smash into a heavy breakdown, all with opinionated yelling punk vocals. The end of the tape is filled with KEN PARKER, LEE PERRY, and PRINCE BUSTER. This is easily the best and most creative thing I've heard in 2016. Who are these weirdo geniuses? (Michael) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, snakesonpcp@gmail.com)

SPEAR – They claim Oi!, punk, hardcore, straightedge, and Cincinnati. I've never been to Cincinnati, and straightedgers / skinheads make me feel like I'm about to get beat up for breaking rules I never agreed to, but I like Oi! and hardcore music. The first three songs sound like pretty straight ahead hardcore jams, the last one is a COCK SPARRER cover. Maybe the straightedge cancels out some of the Oi!? Sounds good to me, but with bands claiming Oi! and not providing lyrics, I'm a little hesitant. (Alex) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, spearhc@gmail.com, 4Q Tape, 406 Fairfield Ave Bellevue, KY 41073)

TIDELAND – *Love Luster* – Overcast post-punk on the grunge side of punk songwriting but with the confidence of indie rock. Often times they'll wash out into gaze, but they're always coherent enough to stroll back to comforting punk rock. For fans of BUILT TO SPILL, DINOSAUR JR, DIVISION OF LAURA LEE, CAP'N JAZZ, coffee, beanies, college campuses, writing in your journal, and getting past your personal bullshit. As cliché as it is, music like this perfectly scores that coming-of-age time in everyone's life because it gives us the reflective headspace to become better people. I'm so glad that there are still bands like this. (Michael) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, tideland.bandcamp.com, facebook.com/tidelandva)

TRAUMA – A pleasantly done recording of a band one could group in with grindcore, but with more of a trash metal sound. I imagine shit being a lot realer in the Czech Republic, and that image complements this bands sincere guitar riffs and solid drum fills, not unlike the political crust of my youth. It reminds me of ISKRA, but it could also be my regional brain. Probably a fun band live or while riding your bike fast. (Legs) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, shrunky@freemail.hu, c/o Erik Zoldi Botanicka 34, 602 00 Brno, CZECH REPUBLIC)

ULTRA GASH – *Trench Rash* – Slimy, effects-laden punk from Calgary that jumps between energetic almost-hardcore and melodic punk, but with a slight goth-y tinge. While the music can sometimes feel too repetitious, their song structures are often very clever. They subtly switch between similar sounding riffs in ways that give the songs a driving consistency while also maintaining an element of surprise. These different ingredients come together most effectively in a song called "The City," which showcases the band's ability to write fun plodding melodies and juxtapose them with driving punk energy. A big downside to *Trench Rash* for me is that the vocals are effected in such a way that they feel very separate from the song. This may have been the intended effect, but it didn't really do it for me. (Ricky) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, trenchrash.bandcamp.com)

WE/OURS – *Pretty Out There* – Clean, spacey indie rock about alcoholism, gentrification, and being depressed and alone. It's not punk, but is played by people who used to be (and probably still are) in punk bands. It could be described as being on the melodic, radio-friendly end of the post-hardcore spectrum. Not really pushing any boundaries here, but the tracks are pretty. (Heather) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, weours.bandcamp.com)

WONDERCAT – *Ocean Maniacs* – What if SOCKEYE had more sexually oriented lyrics and sounded more like MOLDY PEACHES? Seriously. Lyrical highlights include (but are certainly not limited to): "*dick cutter dick cutter razor blade pussy*," "*don't kiss my face cuz you'll get AIDS*," and "*I was born with seven clits in a werewolf ambulance / you don't need lube cuz you're dripping blood from the girl you just ripped up*." If you are the person that WONDERCAT is looking for, then you will be *very* happy that they've found you. (Robert) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, crimekittens@gmail.com, wondercat69.bandcamp.com, c/o Meow Ghost, 6115 97th St #1C, Rego Park, NY 11374)

V/A – *Another Subculture 3* – Ben Perkins brings us another fruitful hour of interviews, punk music, and candid discussions at London gigs. A cool book-on-tape style zine (or mp3 on his Bandcamp page) that I've been lucky to pluck from the review box every time it's been submitted. This one features chats and/or tunes from PRIESTS, CIANURO, SONIC ORDER, the FLEX, BAD MANIFEST, SHEER MAG, BORDER, CARAMEL, EFIALTIS, NO, GLOSS REJECTION, *STRIKE!* magazine collective, ACTUAL CRIMES, and TOTAL CONTROL. Again, really nicely done and very enjoyable to listen to. (Matt) (17-track cassette, no lyrics, €8 or £5 or $12 postpaid, malicioustelecommunications@gmail.com, Ben Perkins, 42 Claude Road, Leyton, London E10 6ND UNITED KINGDOM)

V/A – *Cold Moon: A Benefit For The Wolf Sanctuary Of PA* – As the title suggests, this nineteen band comp is designed to raise awareness for and benefit a three decades old wolf sanctuary in Pennsylvania. Mostly modern hardcore on the technical end of the spectrum. Highlights to my ears are ABLATION, KNIFE HITS, FUCKING INVINCIBLE, and CARNIST. (Robert) (19-song cassette, no lyrics, hydrogenmanrecords.com)

V/A – *TLAL-VAULT: 2005-2015 Collection, Releases 1-100* – You like fastcore? You like grind? You like powerviolence? If you answered "yes" to these questions, then this is the pot of gold, and To Live A Lie Records is the leprechaun. Excellent way of getting the grind to the masses, this disc has all of the tracks from the first 100 TLAL releases presented in MP3 format for your convenience. Get the grindcore to the fans, put the powerviolence in your hands. (Robert) (?-song DVD-R, no lyrics, www.tolivealie.com)

ZINES

Send zines for review to:
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San Francisco, CA 94146

Reviewers:
(AP) Ari Perezdiez
(BW) Brendan Wells
(CD) Conor Duncan
(DG) Dan Goetz
(DZ) Ryan Modee
(EC) E. Conner
(EW) Eli Wald
(JB) Julia Booz
(MM) Marissa Magic
(OG) Oscar Gutierez
(RB) Rory Britt

AMOR Y SACRIFICIO
$3 / 24 pgs
The first time I heard of *Amor y Sacrificio* was at the Think and Die Thinking Festival in San Jose. That night was full of significance, particularly because I heard the words of this zine come to life through the cracked voice of Sayuri Gomez. She emotionally opened herself, specifically by talking about her immigration status and how it affects every part of her being. I had a long conversation last week about my appreciation for writers who allow us to witness conversations they have with themselves. Although this may not be the intention of the zine, I can definitely see the process that Sayuri had writing it, almost like a self interrogation that went beyond the conversations on immigration policy and reform and into the complete essence of what it means to have undocumented status in the United States. I think there is so much significance in how we frame this conversation, and I feel that Sayuri's narrative does a major part in how we discuss this issues. When we reduce these issues to things that are merely policy related, we reduce people to policy, and that isn't only fucked up, but extremely dangerous. There were moments in this zine where I could relate hard, and it made me stretch deep into myself, my family, and everything they have had to deal with in the context of migration. To even reduce everything that Sayuri is trying to say in this zine into this review would do a major disservice to her narrative and the significance of it. This zine managed to challenge me and confront some things I have never really thought about. Truly shape-shifting. (OG)
noshamedistro@gmail.com

AÑO 0
5€ / 36 pgs
There were only a couple of things I could collect from this zine. At most, it seems to simply be a way to document what the Andalucia Über Alles project is doing. From what I can gather, they host shows and are totally conscious of their place in punk. The majority of the zine was one long story of how and why this project came to be. There were some flyers, photos, and other excerpts written by people in the project. Cool stuff, but not much substance here. (OG)
andaluciauberalles@gmail.com

CASTING COUCH #3
$7ppd / 32 pgs
Slightly slick Austin rock zine with quite possibly the thickest paper I've ever seen a zine printed on. No offense intended towards the Goner crowd, but Gonerfest is mentioned about a zillion times in here, so you probably already have a good idea of what to expect. There are band interviews with King Louie, Negative Scanner, Frau, Cuntz, and a pretty cool article on a band of pissed off New Zealand weirdos, Sharpie Crows. A pretty short list of music reviews, drawings, and photos—that look like they were intended to be pin-ups—of some wild and sweet rockers. There's also what could be the dumbest, shittiest rant by a young musician I've read in a good dozen years. So weird. This zine is good, though. If I were more of a dirty rocker, this would be awesome. (DZ)
2402B East 13th Street, Austin, TX 78702

CHEAPTOYS #18
$2 / 58 pgs
I miss zines like this. It's very exemplary of early aughts zine culture. A blockprinted cover, mostly in French, with content ranging from stories of tramping around to interviews with a radical theater troupe—and there are even vegan recipes!!! Highlights include a Dubai scene report and a little history lesson about pre-war vegan anarchist social centers in France. He even implores you to send him a letter. (EC)
Giz, 7, Rue Mazagran, 1 3001 Marseille, FRANCE / xtramedium@laposte.net

COOL HISS #1
$2 / 12 pgs
Letter-size zine from Richmond, VA. This zine is really good. It's in the vein of *Nuts!* or *Cretins of Distortion*, but there's a distinct style that distinguishes *Cool Hiss* from other zines I've read. There's an interesting piece about how many times you can play a flexi without any loss in quality where they looked at the flexi in Audacity to see how (or if) it degraded over the course of extended play. It's real dorky, but it's cool as hell, and the results might change your whole game. Also, interviews with Plastic and Total Punk, reviews, and the like. It's fun to read. I'm ready for issue two! (CD)
2227 Venable Street, Richmond, VA 23223 / toofartoolate.bigcartel.com

EGGY'S DEAD
$5 / 38 pgs
This is a literary zine put out by the same people who brought you the punk/Oi! podcast *Riot Radio*. The artwork is interesting, imaginative drawings throughout the zine with various stories, and poetry submitted by a host of different people. I particularly enjoyed the poetry. Some of it was very peaceful imagery, while others were kind of wacky. I kind of wish the zine had more of a rhythm to it. With contributor-based zines, I feel it is important to have a good flow even if there is not one basic storyline or theme. This one was kind of all over the place, although maybe that was the intent. I am curious to read the next issue and see what they do next. (RB)
Kevin Esposito, PO Box 3696, Philadelphia, PA 19125

ENJOY CLEVELAND
$10 / 45 minutes
This DVD has fourteen current Cleveland hardcore and punk bands playing a song or two live in front of a green screen. It's goofy and the bands rule, like watching old vids of '80s hardcore bands on their local cable access station. Each performance is a treat, and these brilliant idiots do their city proud. The recordings sound great, so you could even just put this on in the background to listen to, but it's a lot of fun to watch Diva Cup play in front of a monster truck rally and Bad Noids play to piñata bloopers and kids crying at the Little

League World Series. Cruelster, Perverts Again, Real Regular, Vanilla Poppers, and Wet Brain are all featured, plus more. I wish every punk scene would make a cool DVD like this one. This is amazing, thank you for making it. I think over the 45 minutes of this DVD there is only one band with a lady in it, though, which is a bummer. (BW)
noidfilm.bigcartel.com

EXSCIND #1
$4 / 34 pgs
Boy, this one is faaaancy! Full color, postcard quality covers, wrapped in a clear plastic, printed exoskeleton, and secured neatly with a black lace fucking bow!!! This dude has seriously stepped up his game! This zine is mostly stories. Not boring personal shit like you'd think, but just stories of life spattered with really super nice photos. Some stories are a pinch fucked up, like in a dude way, but most were serious page-turners. I've seen a few of these zines pop up with a similar backstory. A zinester did zines forever ago and turned to blogging when the internet took over the planet and now is tiptoeing through paper media again. This isn't punk in the least, like not one bit, but it's a pretty interesting read and most fucking definitely wasn't just thrown together to meet a self-imposed deadline. The photos were pretty tight! (DZ)
Adel Souto, 171 Madison Street #2, Brooklyn, NY 11216 / adelsouto.com

GOING TOO FAR/GONE
$3 / 42 pgs
This zine is aesthetically interesting, but words included in art are always tough. It's mainly heavy toner smears and photobooth pictures, which looks beautiful, but then there is some poem type thing running throughout, and it gives the whole thing a cheesy pretentious flair. I'm always in awe of art that manages to have text that doesn't come across as such, or even just poetry that doesn't feel like that. How to make it not a slogan? Or come across as the work of a dramatic teen? Or sounding cartoon deep? (MM)
chaosqueerz.tumblr.com

HOW COULD YOU BELIEVE THIS MIGHT BE MADE ALRIGHT
$6 / 20 pgs
Once there was a copy of the *New Yorker* in the bathroom of my house for like a whole year, and I kept re-reading this interview with Lydia Davis. I probably read it in full at least 30 times and occasionally just opened it up to cringe. This b-word is literally so into the economy of her craft that she spends afternoons in her upstate schoolhouse-turned-home correcting the pulp novels that her local book club assigns while her husband paints in the parlor. It's obvious she's a class enemy, but the fascination and abject horror I feel when I think about her are mysterious things. I eventually bought her collection and was reading it on the train when this mid-thirties hip middle class lady freaked out on me and told me it was her favorite book and that she bought it on Amazon. I don't mind sharing tastes with this milieu, but it seemed really freaky to talk about how you bought a book online when you talk about the book. My point is: sometimes the underground churns out shit in the same flavors as the rest of this shit world. So if you buy recycled toilet paper and pray to a tolerant god, then this little chapbook might feel ethically in line. I liked it! (EC)
animalkingdompublishing@gmail.com / animalkingdompublishing.com

LOOKIE HERE PHOTO ZINE #1
$4 / 28 pgs
This zine, put together by SoCal-based photographer Don Seki, reminds me of a high school yearbook, which I mean in the best possible way. It's black and white, glossy, easy to flip through, and the pictures seem to document a time and place. Most of the photos were taken of powerviolence and D-beat bands between 2009-2013 at various venues throughout Los Angeles. There are some great gems of Lack of Interest, Weekend Nachos, and Despise You. It is a decent addition to the collection if those bands or photo zines in general are up your alley. (RB)
soapandspikes.bigcartel.com

THE MIDWESTERN JOURNAL OF JEWISH RAGE
$3 or free for prisoners / 22 pgs
I absolutely love when zines are pocket sized. When they are that small, they are all the more likely to be taken with me on my daily commute to re-read over and over again. This cut and paste, blue, half-sized zine is packed full of stories of how the writer's Jewish identity has impacted various situations in their life, each told using a letter from the Hebrew alphabet. The layout is pretty cool. I received it looking almost like a photocopy of a photocopy. That grittiness is what makes punk zines so great. I love the smell of old books and the library, so when zines look that worn in, there is something comforting about it. Being from the Midwest and also Jewish, I really related to this zine and the experiences the writer had. There is a Yiddish word for non-kosher: *treif*, which this definitely was not. It was darkly humorous and honest. I was happy and am excited for the next issue. (RC)
jewishrage.tumblr.com

NO FRIENDS #2
$6.50 / 116 pgs and two-sided flexi
It's impossible to look at *No Friends* and not think of it in the same way I think about *MRR*—the magazines have the same format in almost every way. The content reaches for things that might be outside of the *MRR* vibe, though, and *No Friends'* glowing review of *Razorcake* spells out that a lot of influence comes from that magazine as well. I hate to nitpick, but if *No Friends* is going to present itself as a full-blown magazine that publishes on newsprint, includes a flexi in every issue, and takes their sweet time to publish quarterly, then they need to use their time and resources to make a better product. That extra time publishing quarterly allows for should mean someone in charge of design could take the time to look over the magazine to catch illegible text and botched formatting and find some photos to go with this interview of Hell & Back. Instead, it feels like they used their time to wrangle up a large quantity of content rather than quality. Hundreds of record reviews (some well-written and helpful, some not), a butt load of columnists (a "something for everybody" approach: a column about being goth, a column about being a stripper, a column about being the punk mother of an autistic child, a column about pro wrestling...), and eleven featured interviews/articles, of which I think maybe half should have been printed and only two are great. The Lol Tolhurst interview has very little content—they really should have been able to put something with more substance in the mag instead of relying on the concept of a big name interview that doesn't deliver and takes up space. The Bernays Propaganda interview was a great read (insightful, philosophical, and thought-provoking in only two pages), and the best part of the magazine is definitely the Royal Headache interview, a revealing and emotional conversation with the lead singer. This interview might be the thing worth buying the magazine for, kind of like how last issue's reason was the Lumpy / Ausmuteants split flexi, but it's a struggle to actually read the interview because of poor font and formatting choices. There's another flexi split with this one, but much like the hodgepodge assemblage of the mag, there are four very different bands on one record, and it just sounds messy (though I like the Siamese Twins song). (BW)
PO Box 12343, Chicago, IL 60612 / nofriendszine.com

NUTS! #18
$2 / 6 pgs
I frequently venture outside of my extremely loyal devotion to religiously reading every

new issue of about four different zines. Nine times out of ten I crawl back underwhelmed, uninspired, or bored. *Nuts!* is one of my four mainstays. It's definitely not a gamble, and I can count on it to fulfill a certain necessity of some niche cultural ephemerical desire. In this issue we have an interview with Mommy, who mostly talk about Mike's history of being institutionalized, Emmy Ramone reviews and recommends some bangers, Jeff from Oly gives back stories of (most of) his band tattoos, and Aaron Cometbus pulls out some obscure punk history with an essay on hardcore business cards. Pull out poster as usual, by Beau and Sonya, and some comics. Never disappointed, always satisfied. (AP)
PO Box 1959, New York, NY 10013

PULL THE TRIGGER #1
£2 / 71 pgs
There's a lot to wade through here. Numerous interviews, mostly with bands in or near the UK, that are competent and interesting enough once you get into them but don't really do much to convince the uninitiated to check out their subjects, whether it be with descriptive intros or photos or layouts that really capture the essence of a given band. There are some columns that vary in merit and some OK record and zine reviews. The piece on the decline of social housing in the UK is definitely the most worthwhile part of this zine and makes me want to learn more and fill in the contextual gaps for myself on this topic. The layout has a lot of cut out text blocks on a plain background occasionally interspersed with small, not-that-well reproduced photos. I think this zine could be really good if it focused a bit more on quality over quantity and made the layout a bit more interesting, though it is only the first issue. (DG)
kibourecords@hotmail.co.uk

RUIDO #1
7 pgs
This photozine folds out to a sheet of paper a little under 11"x17" but contains seven photos of various sizes of bands such as Vitamin X, Hoax, Generacion Suicida, Belgrado, and so forth. The photos are quite good, both in terms of what they capture and how they are reproduced, and the off-white on black color scheme adds an extra aesthetically pleasing element. (DG)
xcarlospatinox.com

SEVEN INCHES TO FREEDOM #13
$3.50ppd USA / 36 pgs
It's hard to believe that this zine has been going for around a decade now. It is truly a gem in terms of enthusiastic and informed writing about bands that often no longer exist but deserve to be remembered more than they are. The "best hardcore bands you've forgotten about" and "best hardcore bands you've never heard" features delve into bands such as the great Devoid of Faith, Sound Like Shit, Boxed In, US Wasted, and more. In the same spirit, there is also an interview with early '90s hardcore band Halfman, a great interview with *Cretins of Distortion* that gets into the nuts and bolts in a funny fashion, and touching obituaries for Travis Fristoe (*America?* zine and many other things) and Filip Fuchs (See You In Hell, etc.), the latter of which includes a reprint of his "My First Record" story (a regular feature of this zine for a while, though not this issue) that also gives some background to his experience with punk in the former Czechoslovakia. Although I'm not 100% up on the last few issues, I always pick it up when I see it, and it's great to see the trajectory of Joe's writing and musical interests as time goes on, especially since his taste is very much his own. (DG)
PO Box 457, Fort Myers, FL 33902 / sitfzine.storenvy.com

SUSPECT DEVICE #57
£1.50 / 22 pages
The bulk of this zine is interviews, featuring Tørsö, Healer of Bastards, the Number Ones, and Permanent Ruin. The interviews are a little stiff—none of the questions seem particularly interesting. Permanent Ruin's interview is actually pretty good despite the questions—it seems like each member put a lot of thought into their responses. The rest of the zine is columns and reviews. If you're into reading about people who wax nostalgic about the good ol' days of punk and you have a passing curiosity in some of the bands on the scene today, this might be a good zine for you. (CD)
suspectdevicehq@hotmail.com / suspectdevicezine.co.uk

TERMBO #3
$4 / 36 pages
Another cool big zine. This one is a print companion to the blog *Terminal Boredom*, which has been up for a while and generally posts high quality content. This zine is good, too. It's big and it fits in your hands and when you open it up you read it and sometimes laugh or furrow your brow. I liked the column about Raymond Pettibon's films by Sarah Janet and the Video Hell column by Rob Vertigo. I had to do a double take on the reviews section when it wasn't just a list with star ratings. Check it out and see, alongside in-depth interviews with Neil Hagerty, Mordecai, and Shoot It Up. There's a lot of content, and it's going to look good on your coffee table, or nightstand, or whatever. (CD)
301 Tremaine Avenue, Kenmore, NY 14217 / thelokilabel.storenvy.com

TRIGGER #2
$3 / 16 pgs
Trigger is a journal of speculative sexuality. It's a huge newspaper with seething, beautiful art in it, such as the map of a moment that includes both Oakland landmarks and parts of the Puget Sound. There are highlighted areas that tell of memories of a lover. It is sad and quaint. Mainly there are essays that come across like difficult poetry. The first is about Catarealism, described as a "healing violence." It's hard to understand, but I'll quote the part that is point blank: "Catarealism is an infinite moment where things that cannot be—are." It is also described as the anarchism of the heart. I think it means a space where you can actualize your hopes and destroy time. Next is something called Liturgy that I didn't bother to read because it is printed completely backwards. Sorry people. There is also a story about lovers who meet in a smelly gross alley to fuck, and it examines the complications, restrictions, and contradictions in their meeting. A lot of this journal feels like unfinished thoughts or an entryway to something else. I'm into this the way I'm into channel surfing. It's a momentary glimpse of something which starts a thought pattern that may emerge on a new plane of consciousness or at least a different place than you started. I think my favorite piece is "Icarus Tits," which tells of the summer when the author wore giant fake tits around town, exploring subjectivity in a constant state of arousal at being attracted to himself. Losing sight of the line between being who you want to fuck and loving yourself. It's beautiful, even if the outcome is that he was being a poseur into Queerness and simply trying on femininity with none of the trappings. In another, more complicated piece, I'm afraid I totally don't know what it means, but it sounds so good: "That which does not produce acceptance and intimacy through risk is not radical sex but one of any number of forms of abuse or commerce." I think you should get this paper and eat it alive. (JB)
Søren c/o the Long Haul, 3124 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94705 / catarealist@gmail.com

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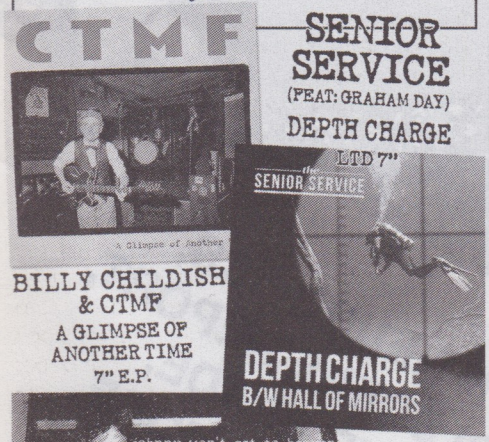

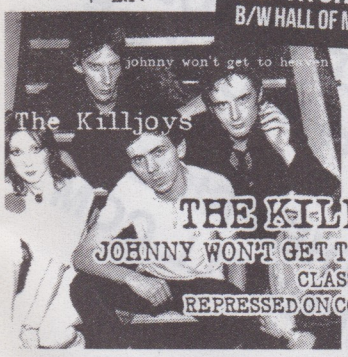

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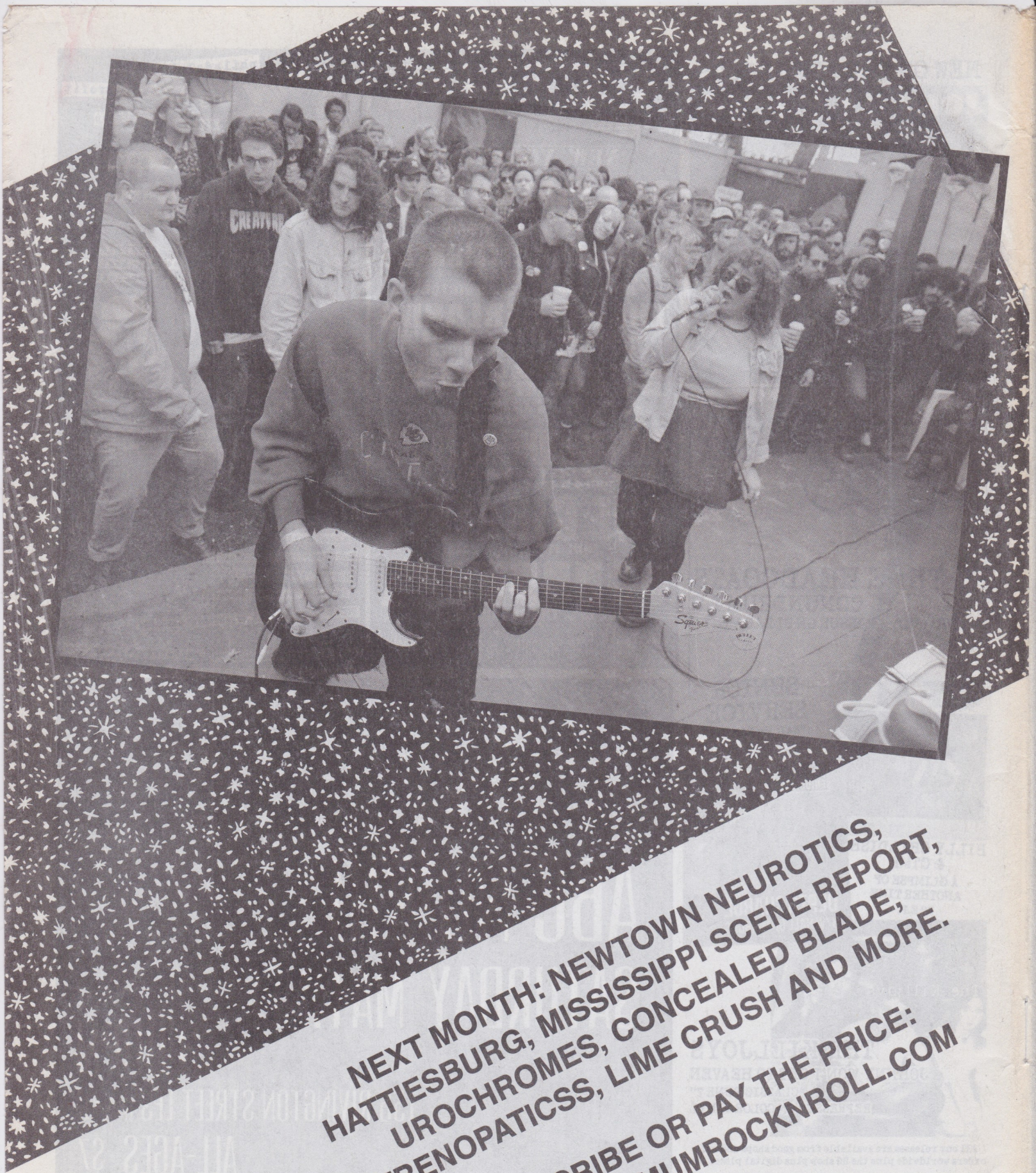

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